THE RISE OF THE DESCENDANTS!

As Father launches his invasion, a terrible new Avengers foe is born: beware the bite of the Black Ant! Can the Marvel Universe survive the plague of contagious robotic evolution, merging the Descendants with all humanity? And how do you stop a plague that has already begun to spread? Torch, Venom and Valkyrie infiltrate the rebel robot base — but are Lord UltraVision and Monarch Machine Man friend or foe? And when Torch must choose between mankind and the perfect future Father will create for all automatons, which will he pick? As Black Ant and Hawkeye face off in the ultimate showdown, the Master Mold rises over New York — and the only way to stop it is to kill the Torch!

ARTHUR ADAMS

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MARVEL

Collecting *Secret Avengers #33-37* — written by **Rick Remender**, and illustrated by **Matteo Scalera** and **Andy Kuhn.**

ARTHUR ADAMS 9-28-12

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VOL 3

SECRET AVENGERS

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33

REMENDER
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SECRET AVENGERS

ARTHUR ADAMS 5-22 2012

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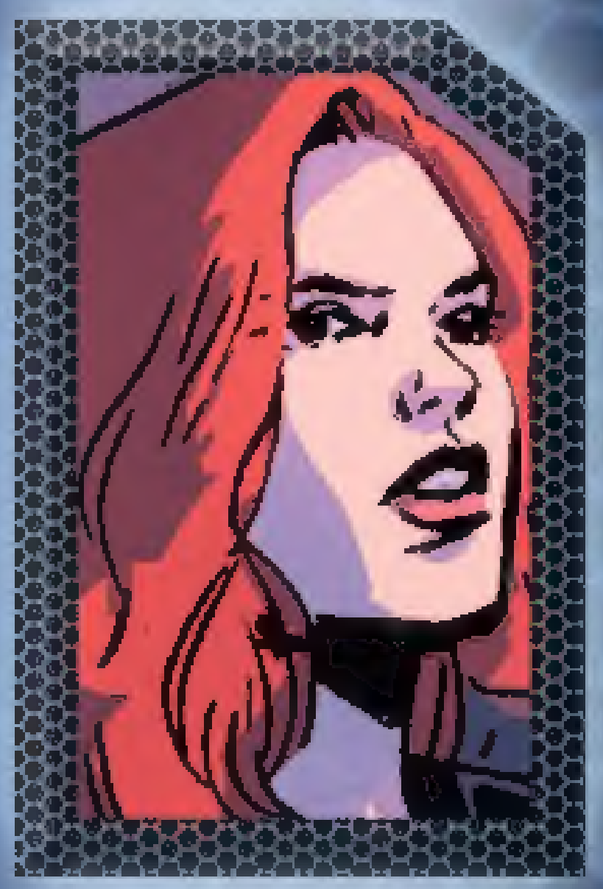
BROUGHT TOGETHER AS A COVERT MISSIONS UNIT BY STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND BASED ON A MINIATURIZED LIGHTHOUSE STATION IN ORBIT ABOVE THE EARTH, THE SECRET AVENGERS TAKE ON THE WORLD'S BIGGEST THREATS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN.

SECRET AVENGERS

RISE OF THE DESCENDANTS

HAWKEYE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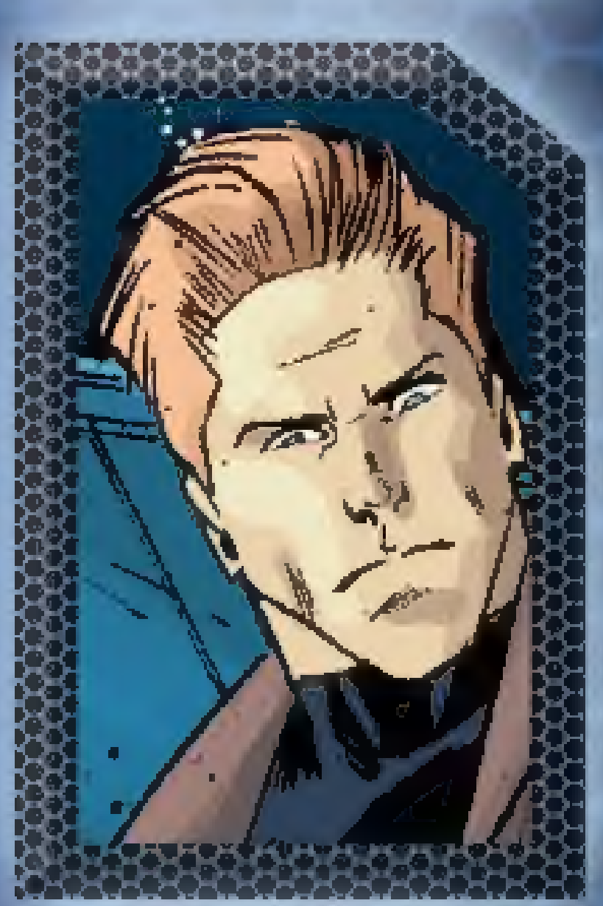
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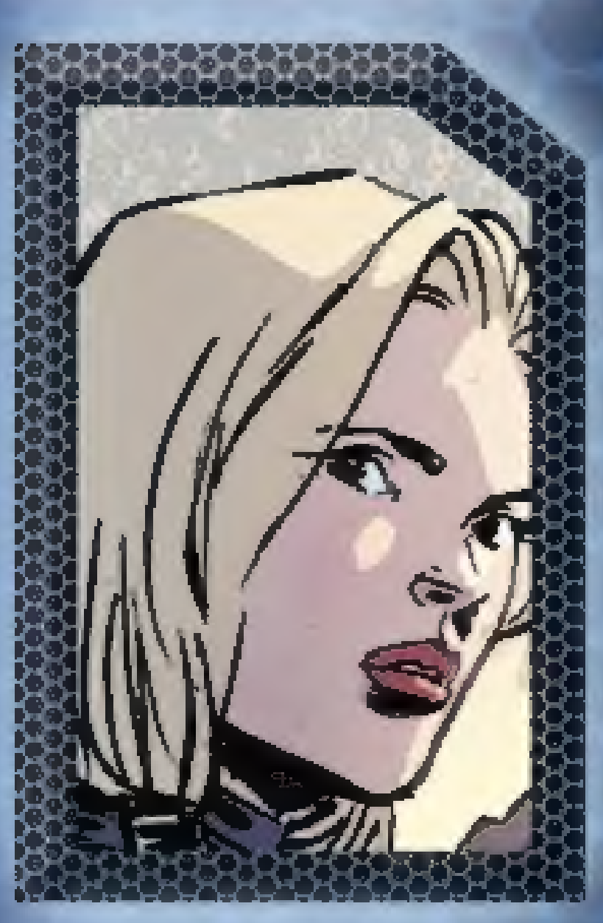
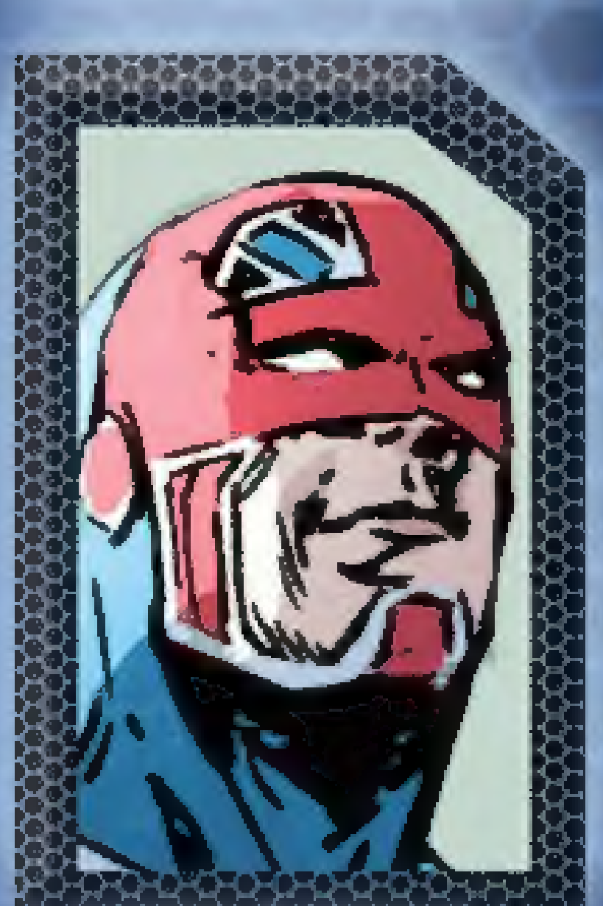
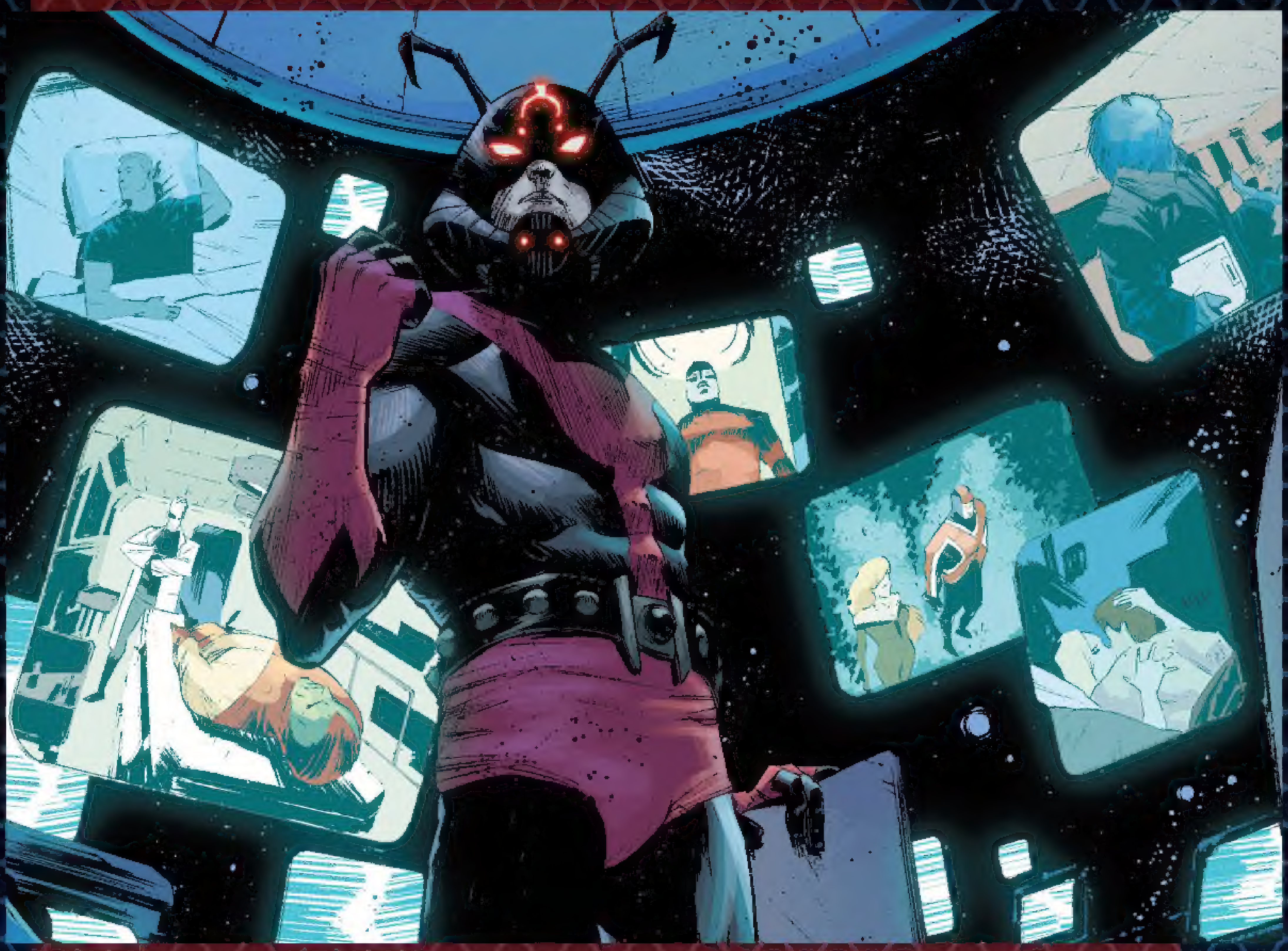

VALKYRIE

ANT-MAN


CAPTAIN BRITAIN

VENOM



THE **DESCENDANTS** ARE A LINEAGE OF MECHANICAL LIFE-FORMS **CREATED BY** THE MAN KNOWN AS **FATHER** USING THE ORB OF NECROMANCY AND WORKING FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGN OF THE HUMAN TORCH. MANY OF THEM LIVE AMONG THE HUMAN RACE, UNAWARE OF THEIR TRUE NATURE.

RECENTLY, THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF VENOM AND ANT-MAN, THE SECRET AVENGERS DEFEATED THE ABYSS, PREVENTING ITS INFLUENCE FROM INFECTING THE WORLD. MAX FURY, THE SENTIENT LIFE MODEL DECOY OF SUPERSPY NICK FURY, IS NOW IN THEIR CUSTODY. THE BLACK WIDOW DISCERNED THAT ANT-MAN WAS UNAFFECTED BY THE ABYSS BECAUSE HE WAS ACTUALLY A LIFE MODEL DECOY IN LEAGUE WITH THE DESCENDANTS. BUT HAWKEYE, IN LIGHT OF ANT-MAN'S RECENT HEROISM, DISMISSED WIDOW'S CONCERNS, CAUSING HER TO LEAVE THE TEAM. BUT SHE WAS CORRECT. ERIC O'GRADY'S SINISTER CYBERNETIC DOUBLE, THE BLACK ANT, HAS BEEN LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR FATHER'S PLANS!

RICK REMENDER
WRITER

ANDY KUHN
ARTIST

MATTHEW WILSON
COLOR ART

VC's CLAYTON COWLES
LETTERER

ARTHUR ADAMS & PETER STEIGERWALD
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LIGHTHOUSE STATION.
I'VE GOT FURY'S MEMORIES!
THUDD
I COULD DO YOU ALL IN! YA HEAR?!
AT SOME POINT, YOU DISCOVER THAT EVERY MEMORY YOU HAVE BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE.
EVERYTHING THAT MAKES YOU WHO YOU ARE.
I KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU PIGS THAN YOU DO!
EVERY LOVE.
EVERY HATE.
EVERY PASSION.
I KNOW EVERYTHIN'...
I KNOW...
YOU FIND OUT YOU'RE JUST A DIGITAL RECORDING OF A LIVING PERSON.
A LIFE MODEL DECOY.
AND THAT IS WHEN MOST OF US GO INSANE.
NOT REAL.
IT'S ALL HIS...HIS MEMORIES. NICK FURY. AN' I'M NOT HIM...
BUT I'M FINE AND DANDY ABOUT IT.

HEY, MAXO, HOW'S YOUR NERVOUS BREAKDOWN COMING?
BEING AN IMMORTAL FAKE SUITS ERIC O'GRADY JUST FINE.
ER-ERIC... YOU--YOU'RE HERE TO GET ME *OUT*?
I CAN *HELP* FATHER, ERIC.
I KNOW *MORE* THAN I EVER TOLD ANYONE--
ABOUT *EVERYTHING*-- ABOUT *EVERYONE!*
STILL-- YOU BACKED THE WRONG PONY. LIED TO FATHER.
WORKED THIS SUPERNATURAL ANGLE ON YOUR OWN.
BUT FATHER KNOWS YOU'RE A SUPER-DUPER SPY WITH LOTS OF *JUICY* GOSSIP TO *SHARE.*
AND THERE'S OTHER *STUFF* YOU CAN SHARE TOO, RIGHT?
I-I'LL DO WHATEVER, ERIC.
I WAS ONLY GONNA USE THE ABYSS TO HELP--
TO HELP GET RID OF THE HUMANS AND MAKE WAY FOR THE DESCENDANTS. YOU GOTTA TRUST ME--

MAX, YOU'RE A LIFE MODEL DECOY OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST SPY, AND YOU'RE WORKING FOR NO FEWER THAN THREE ORGANIZATIONS THAT I KNOW OF...
TRUST NEEDS TO BE EARNED.
I CAN SEE THAT.
ANY FOOL CAN SEE THAT.
WHICH BRINGS US BACK TO WHAT YOU'LL BE SHARING WITH THE FAMILY, MAX.
ANYTHING YOU WANT.
FATHER WANTS BAGALIA.
SIGN THESE PAPERS AND SHOW HIM YOU'RE WILLING TO SHARE, MAX.
CLASSIFIED
AND THEN I'M BACK?
THERE. EVERYTHING.
TAP-TAP
GOOD-GOOD.
NOW THE TURN.
WHAT?
YOU--YOU CAN'T DO IT LIKE THIS--BUILD UP MY HOPES--
RIGHT...

...I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU *HATE* BETRAYAL.
GRAAGAHHH-
GAZZAKK
ON SOME LEVEL, I IDENTIFY WITH MAX.
I REMEMBER EVERY DAY OF ERIC O'GRADY'S LIFE--
EVEN THE DAY HE DIED.
HIS (MY) HEAD UNDER AN ADAPTOID BOOT--
CAVED IN AGAINST THE ROT OF A DANK ALLEYWAY.
REWARD FOR A *GOOD* DEED.
THE WORLD WENT BLACK.
A MOMENT LATER, HE (I) WOKE UP IN FATHER'S CHAMBER.
RISE AN' SHINE, TORCH.
E-ERIC...? PUT ME BACK IN HIBERNATION...
N-NOT NEARLY HEALED...

I'D BEEN DEAD, BUT WAS REBORN IMMORTAL.
BACKED UP.
ELECTRONIC.
A DESCENDANT.
EASY-- I GOT YOU.
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW, BROTHER.
WE HAVE TO HURRY--YOU WON'T SURVIVE LONG OUT OF STASIS.
DON'T WORRY-- I'M SENDING YOU TO PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP.
MY NEW LIFE WAS A GIFT, FATHER TOLD ME.
A GIFT HE'D TAKE BACK IF I DIDN'T QUICKLY LEARN TO SEE THINGS HIS WAY.
SO YOU KNOW WHAT?
I DID.
I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU, GRANDFATHER.
AS A HUMAN, I DIED A HERO--
--PAID THE ULTIMATE PRICE.
BUT WHAT THOSE WHO LAY DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR OTHERS CAN'T TELL YOU--
YOU REGRET IT.
DEEP BEEP
THAT FINAL MOMENT BEFORE THE END CAME, I COULD SEE...

...I'D DO *ANYTHING* TO STAY ALIVE.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, BLACK ANT.
THE AVENGERS WILL NOT SOON FORGET THE WRATH OF **EMPEROR DOOMBOT!**
POINT ME AT THE PIGS-- I'M *ITCHING* TO *SCRATCH.*
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, LADY DEATHSTRIKE, BEYOND YOUR PETTY NEED TO KILL AND DOMINATE...
...WHERE IS PARVEZ?
WHERE IS MY SON?

OTHERWORLD, THE STARLIGHT CITADEL.
YES, ALL THE OMNIVERSE IS ACCESSIBLE THROUGH THIS TOWER.
NEW DOORS CONSTANTLY APPEARING, THE TOWER GROWING INTO INFINITY.
SO EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THESE DOORS LEADS TO ANOTHER REALITY? AND YOUR CAPTAIN BRITAIN CORPS POLICES THEM ALL?
YES.
WOW. THAT'S...THAT'S JUST...
A LOT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR.
YOU CAN SEE WHY MY NERVES ARE USUALLY SHOT.
THANK YOU. ENJOY EARTH-666.
666
667
WHERE THE HELL IS BEAST? WOULD FEEL BETTER ABOUT THIS WITH A THIRD MEMBER.
HE'S LATE--WE'LL BE FINE.
AND YOU LEFT THE ORB OF NECROMANCY HERE BECAUSE...?
EVERYONE ON THIS EARTH IS ALREADY UNDEAD. NO ONE HAS ANY USE FOR IT.
AND WHO EXACTLY DID YOU LEAVE IT WITH?

THE AVENGERS OF THE UNDEAD!
CAPTAIN BRITAIN, LORD PROTECTOR OF THE OMNIVERSE.
TO WHAT INCONVENIENCE DO WE OWE YET ANOTHER UNEXPECTED VISIT?
YOU BROUGHT BACKUP--IF YOU'RE LOOKIN' FER A TUSSLE, I GOT ONE.
NOT EVEN THIS CANDY CANE WOULD CONSIDER A "HAWKEYE" BACKUP.
YOUR SAFETY IS NOT ASSURED HERE!
WE DO NOT ENDURE THE LIVING HERE.
AND WE DO NOT WELCOME INTERDIMENSIONAL POLICE CHECKING IN ON US.
C'MON NOW, IS THAT THE WARMEST WELCOME THE STRANGEST MONSTERS EVER CAN GIVE?
I THANK YOU FOR SEEING US, BROTHER VOODOO.
DID WE HAVE A CHOICE?
BLOOD OF AN INNOCENT YOUTH?
NO, THANK YOU.
FORGIVE ME IF I'M CURT.
I NEED THE ORB I LEFT WITH YOU.
YOU TOLD ME NEVER TO RELEASE IT.
I APPRECIATE THE INSTRUCTIONS IT WAS DELIVERED WITH, BUT IT IS URGENT.
HMMH.
DON'T YOU "HMMH" ME.
I HID IT DEEP WITHIN SHUMA GORATH'S EGO MAZE.
WE MUST JOURNEY INTO THE CENTER TOWER WHERE A LIVING MAN CAN DIE OF INTROSPECTION.

BY GREAT MEPHISTO'S PRIDE!
THOR THE ACCURSED WILL NOT BOW TO THESE BRIGHT FOOLS!
ENOUGH-- OUR GOOD BROTHER VOODOO HAS THIS IN HAND.
WHATEVER MUST BE DONE TO REACQUIRE IT, WE CAN HELP.
WHILE YOUR AID IS A *GREAT* COMFORT, YOU UNDERSTAND THE POSITION YOU HAVE PUT US IN IS...*THORNY.*
BUT IT DOES NOT CHANGE THE NEED WE HAVE OF THE ORB.
WELL, YES... FINE.
I WILL RISK THE FABRIC OF MY MIND TO AID YOU IN REACQUIRING THE ORB.
I AM MASTER OF DOORWAYS, BUT I DO NOT CONTROL THE PATHS BEYOND.
YOU TAKE YOUR FATE IN TO YOUR OWN HANDS-- I CANNOT PROTECT YOU BEYOND THIS.
SURE. A *PRENUPTIAL* IS ALWAYS THE *BEST* WAY TO BEGIN AN ADVENTURE.
WE AGREE TO ANY CONDITIONS, DRUMM.
YOU AGREE BECAUSE YOU KNOW NOT THE *RISKS* THIS WAY HOLDS.

MORE WICKED WITCHERY THAN AN AFTERNOON WITH DR. STRANGE...
I WAS JUST SAYING HOW ODD IT IS TO SEE A GROUP OF AVENGERS WHO ACTUALLY RESPECT YOU.
I DIDN'T CATCH THAT.
THE CAPTAIN BRITAIN CORPS ARE ESTEEMED IN MOST REALITIES, BARTON.
JUST NOT OURS.
I'M KIDDING, BRIAN. LIGHTEN UP. I RESPECT YOU.
VALKYRIE TOLD ME YOU HELD THE PHOENIX BACK BY *YOURSELF*. HOW COULD I NOT RESPECT A GUY WHO CAN DO THAT?
ACTUALLY, I WAS A BIT SHOCKED YOU *NEVER* MENTIONED IT.
BECAUSE THE *TRUE* VALUE OF A DEED IS IN THE BOASTING OF IT?
JUST SAYIN'. I WOULD'VE TOLD PEOPLE.
AND WE TAKE ONE STEP CLOSER TO DEFINING OUR DIFFERENCES.
YOU ARE CERTAIN THERE IS NO OTHER SOLUTION?
NO. WE MUST HAVE THE ORB.
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU'LL HAVE TO CONVINCE TO HAND IT OVER...

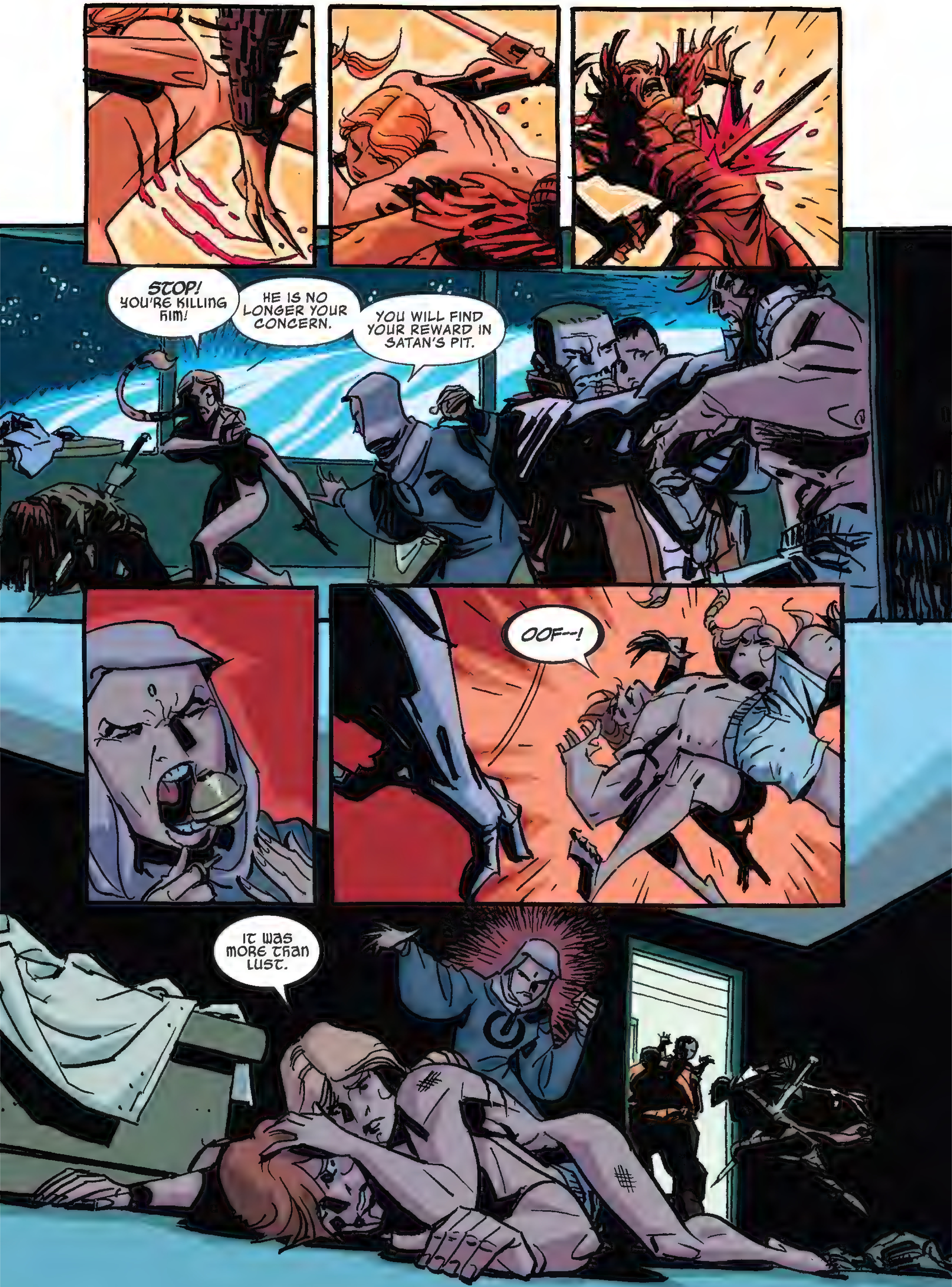
...AND THE UNDEAD CELESTIAL HEARS NO PLEA FROM THE LIVING!
BRIAN, I THINK WE'RE IN--
KRAKOOOM
OOF--!
VERILY MACABRE!
HE'S OUR GOD, BUB--AN' WITH THE ORB YOU FOOLS GAVE HIM...

"...WE'RE GONNA SPREAD *UNDEATH* TO THE ENDS OF *REALITY.*"
...THIS DESCENDANT TECH IS *WELL* BEYOND WHAT I ENCOUNTERED WHEN I INVESTIGATED THE *VISION'S* WORKINGS.
ORGANIC MACHINERY BONDED TO THE ENTIRE C.N.S., PART *PHALANX.*
I RECOGNIZE SOME OF *PHINEAS HORTON'S* WORK IN THERE--
SOME OF *MINE,* AS WELL.
A COBBLING OF SO MANY TECHNOLOGIES *SHOULDN'T* BE ABLE TO EXIST.
THE RESULT IS *TRUE BIOTECHNOLOGICAL LIFE.*
BEAST, WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THESE RECORDINGS, PLEASE CONFIRM MY LIST, IN CASE I'VE OVERLOOKED ANYTHING.
YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED, HANK.
YOU NEVER TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHEN YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING *JUICY* IN THE LAB.
J-JANET--?!
HAWKEYE DIDN'T TELL YOU?
DIDN'T TELL YOU HE'D *FOUND* ME?
KRASHH

GET BACK-- GET THE HELL AWAY FROM ME!
HE KEPT IT FROM YOU.
LIKELY DIDN'T WANT TO RISK INCITING YOUR NEUROTIC AND OBSESSIVE SIDE.
THAT MUST BE HARD. HAVING THEM SHELTER AND PITY YOU.
OR, PERHAPS THEY FEARED THAT SEEING THE ROBOTIC IMMORTALITY THAT YOU HELPED DESIGN WOULD LEAD YOU TO JOIN US?
YOU'RE NOT JANET! GET THE HELL AWAY--
WHERE I COME FROM, YOU ARE WORSHIPED AS A GOD.
ONE MORE STEP--I'LL PUT YOU DOWN MYSELF!
I REMEMBER WHEN YOU USED TO GET MAD.
WHAT WAS IT YOU'D SAY AFTER?
"SOMETIMES IN MOMENTS OF EXTREME DISTRESS...
"...EVEN A GOOD MAN CAN LOSE CONTROL."

WAIT, VAL...
WHAT?
I WANT TO UNDERSTAND...
IS THIS LUST OR...
LUST.
URN, DEATHSTRIKE, KILL THE FORNICATING KIDNAPPERS.

CHRNGG
GHRAGH--
SHNKK
SRKK


STOP! YOU'RE KILLING HIM!
HE IS NO LONGER YOUR CONCERN.
YOU WILL FIND YOUR REWARD IN SATAN'S PIT.
OOF--!
IT WAS MORE THAN LUST.

YALDA EARNED THE KILL. MY HONOR IS INTACT.
KLUPP
MY BOY. MY DEAR PARVEZ.
THE FUTURE HOLDS SUCH WONDERS FOR YOU.
PRINCE OF THE NEW WORLD.

YOU UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DO THIS?
YES, MOTHER ORIGIN.
WE DO.
WE ARE HAPPY.
WE HAVE WHAT WE CAME FOR.
PARVEZ IS UNHARMED. GOD IS GOOD.
VENOM AND VALKYRIE... DID YOU...?
ARE THEY--?
SERVE FATHER--
NO LONGER A CONCERN.

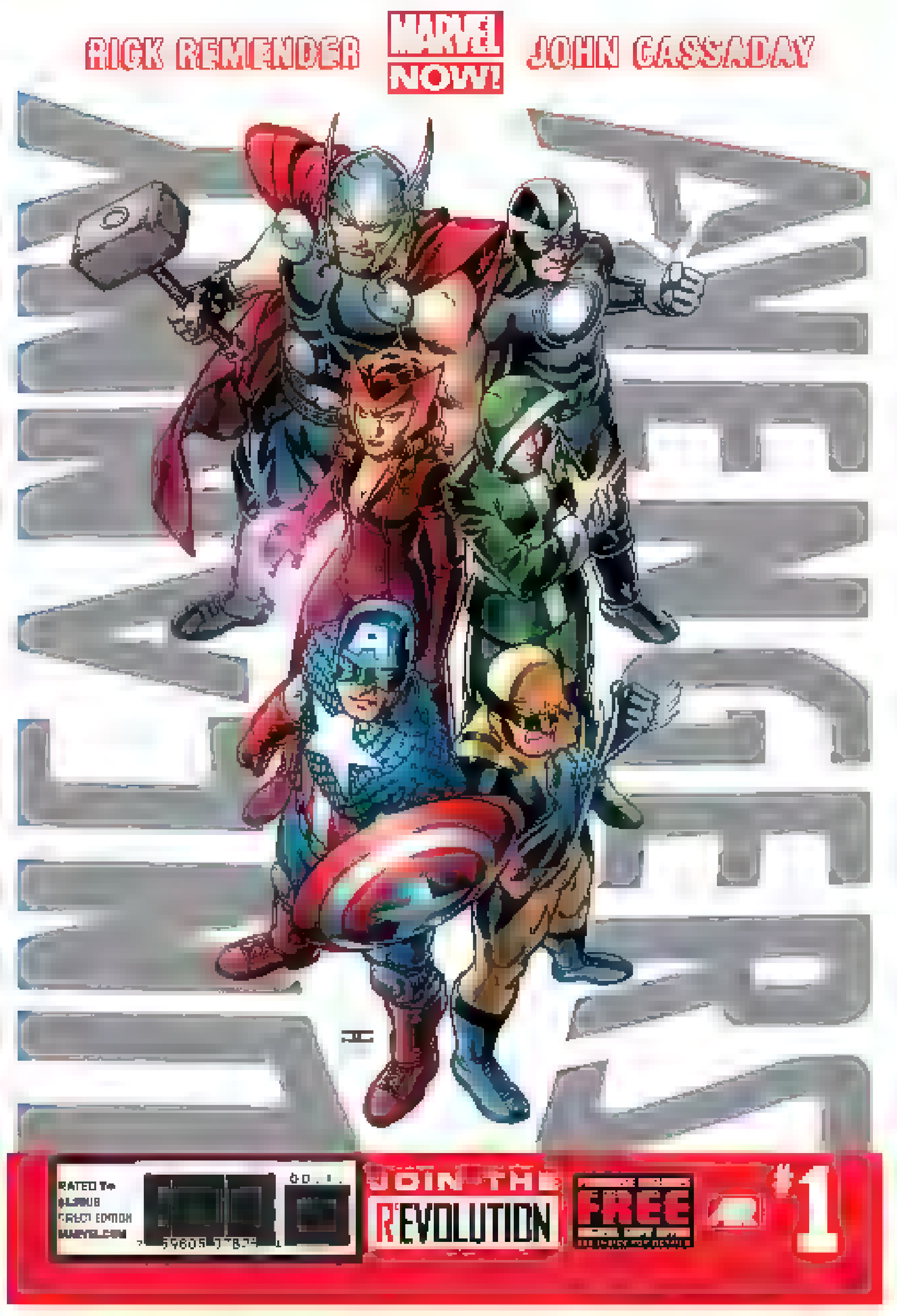
"--SERVE THE FUTURE."
TO BE CONTINUED...

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

THE TIME IS NOW! IT'S BEEN LONG IN THE PLANNING, BUT BEGINNING THIS MONTH, THE MARVEL UNIVERSE TAKES A QUANTUM JUMP INTO THE FUTURE WITH THE ROLL-OUT OF ***MARVEL NOW!*** WE'VE PLAYED A BIG GAME OF MUSICAL CHAIRS WITH OUR CREATORS AND TITLES—NOBODY'S QUITE WHERE YOU EXPECT THEM TO BE ANYMORE! AND HALF THE FUN'S GOING TO BE SEEING WHAT YOUR FAVORITE WRITERS AND ARTISTS DO WITH—AND TO—A BUNCH OF NEW AND DIFFERENT CHARACTERS! IT'S A FULL FLIGHT OF NEW CREATORS ON NEW SERIES GENERATING NEW EXCITEMENT—AND ***YOU*** ARE ***THERE!***

THE BIG STORY AROUND THESE PARTS IS CLEARLY ***UNCANNY AVENGERS #1,*** IN WHICH ACE STORYTELLERS RICK REMENDER AND JOHN CASSADAY REACH ACROSS THE AISLE TO UNITE HEROES BOTH MUTANT AND OTHERWISE INTO AN ALL-NEW ASSEMBLAGE ORGANIZED IN THE AFTERMATH OF ***AVENGERS VS X-MEN!*** IT'S LIKE HAVING CATS AND DOGS LIVING TOGETHER—IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE! FOR FANS THAT DUG RICK'S WORK ON ***UNCANNY X-FORCE*** AND ***SECRET AVENGERS*** OR JOHN'S ILLUSTRATIONS ON ***ASTONISHING X-MEN*** (AND REALLY, WHO DIDN'T?), THIS IS THE SINGLE ABSOLUTE MUST-READ TITLE OF THE MONTH FOR YOU!



ALSO ON SALE THIS OCTOBER AND OF INTEREST TO ALL AVENGERS AFICIONADOS IS ***MARVEL NOW! POINT ONE #1,*** AN ALL-NEW SPECIAL PROVIDING A TANTALIZING GLIMPSE INTO WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR A NUMBER OF KEY MARVEL CHARACTERS—INCLUDING THE MUCH-MISSED YOUNG AVENGERS! IT'S BEING PRODUCED BY A MURDERER'S ROW OF TOP-TIER TALENT, AND REPRESENTS THE GREATEST VALUE FOR MONEY YOU COULD POSSIBLY IMAGINE! (WE'LL STOP THERE BEFORE WE TIRE OURSELVES OUT WITH EXCITEMENT—YOU KNOW HOW WE HATE TO GIVE YOU THE HARD SELL!)

BUT WITH EVERY BEGINNING, THERE MUST ALSO COME AN ENDING, AND SO WE MUST SAY FAREWELL TO AVENGERS SUPER-SCRIBE BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS, WHO'LL BE WRAPPING UP HIS TENURE TOP-KICKING EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES THIS MONTH AND NEXT! NOT ONE TO GO QUIETLY INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT, BRIAN'S BROUGHT END TIMES TO BOTH THE **AVENGERS** AND **NEW AVENGERS,** AS WELL AS THROTTLING UP **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE'S** THANOS THROWDOWN TO A CLIMACTIC FINISH! AT THIS RATE, THERE MIGHT NOT BE ANYTHING LEFT FOR INCOMING WRITER JONATHAN HICKMAN TO WORK WITH!

ELSEWHERE, THE AVENGERS WILL BE MAKING A SPLASH AS THEY LOCK HORNS WITH EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME IN THE DEBUT ISSUE OF **PUNISHER WAR ZONE!** AUTHOR GREG RUCKA AND ILLUSTRATOR MARCO CHECCHETTO PROMISE A NO-HOLDS-BARRED THROWDOWN OF EPIC PROPORTIONS IN THIS ONE! BUT, LET'S FACE IT, WITH THE AVENGERS ON FRANK'S TRAIL, HE'LL BE LUCKY TO MAKE IT TO A SECOND ISSUE!

NEXT ISSUE:

SUPERNATURAL!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE OCTOBER 2012:

UNCANNY AVENGERS #1 ☐
IN THE WAKE OF AVX, A NEW TEAM IS FORMED!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #8 ☐
THANOS TRIUMPHANT, AS BENDIS AND BAGLEY WRAP UP THEIR TENURE!

AVENGERS #31 ☐
END TIMES BEGINS AS A SIGNAL FROM INNER SPACE SUMMONS THE AVENGERS TO THE MICROVERSE! COULD IT BE...?

AVENGERS #32 ☐
BENDIS CONTINUES HIS FINAL STORYLINE AS THE TEAM GOES IN SEARCH OF ONE OF THEIR OWN!

NEW AVENGERS #31 ☐
END TIMES BEGINS FOR THE NEW AVENGERS AS THE TEAM QUESTIONS ITS VERY PURPOSE!

NEW AVENGERS #32 ☐
BENDIS CONTINUES HIS FINAL STORYLINE AS DANIEL DRUMM CARRIES OUT HIS REVENGE!

SECRET AVENGERS #32 ☐
THE NEW MASTERS OF EVIL USHER IN THE ABYSS!

SECRET AVENGERS #33 ☐
THE RISE OF THE DESCENDANTS! AND THE DEBUT OF THE BLACK ANT!

AVENGERS ACADEMY #38 ☐
GUEST-STARRING WOLVERINE AND THE X-MEN!

DARK AVENGERS #182 ☐
THE DARK AVENGERS TAKE ON THE THUNDERBOLTS! WILL CAIN MARKO, THE FORMER JUGGERNAUT, TURN THE TIDE?

AVX CONSEQUENCES #1-5 ☐
THE DEADLY FALLOUT FROM THE CONFLICT THAT SHOOK THE COSMOS, ACROSS FIVE WEEKLY ISSUES!

A + X #1 ☐
WOLVERINE PARTNERS WITH THE HULK, WHILE CAPTAIN AMERICA CROSSES PATHS WITH CABLE IN WWII!

A-BABIES VS X-BABIES #1 ☐
IT'S THE AVENGERS VS THE X-MEN—IN BABY FORM!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE VS THE AVENGERS #1 ☐

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #7 ☐

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SECRET AVENGERS

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ARTHUR ADAMS

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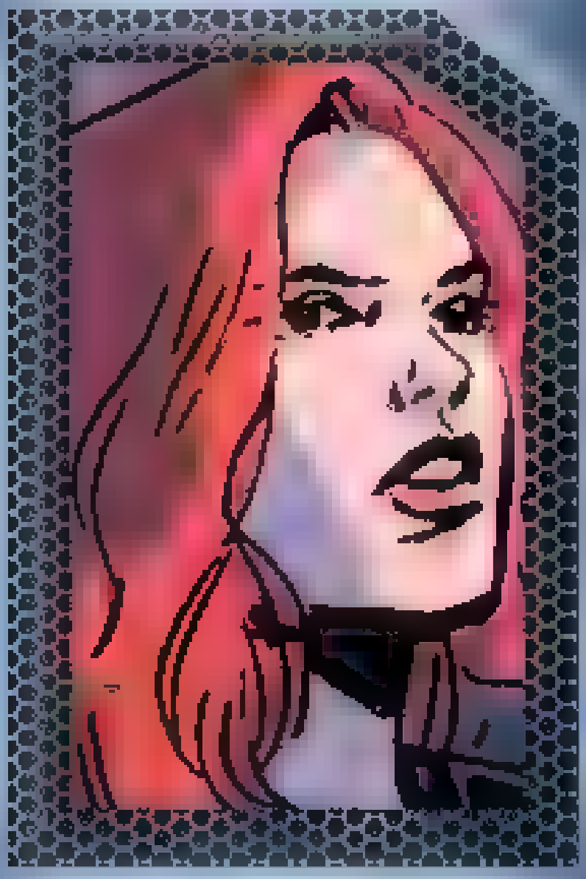
SECRET AVENGERS

SYNTHETIC DAWN

HAWKEYE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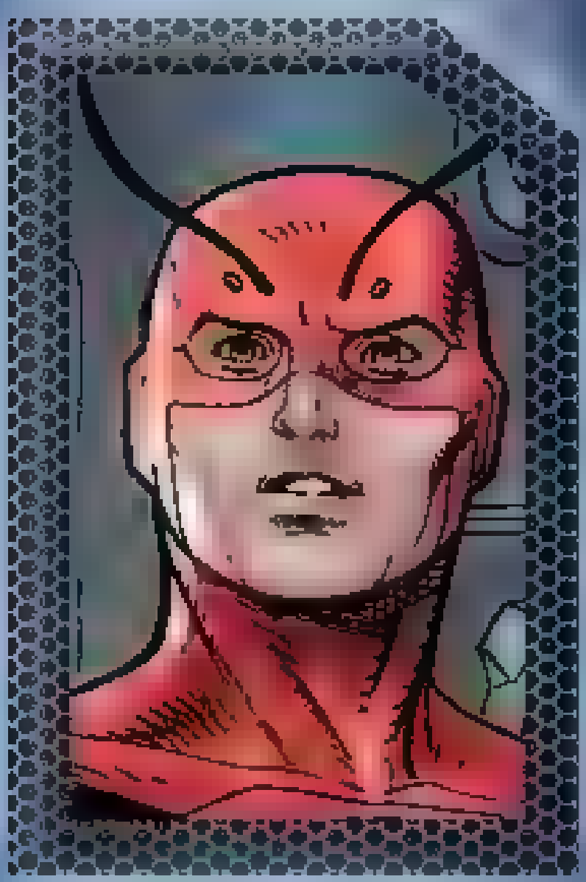
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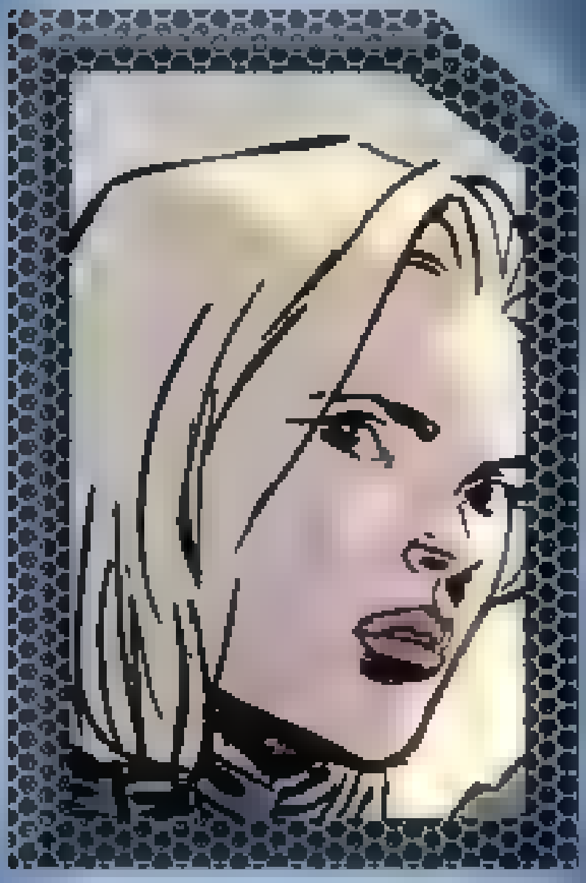
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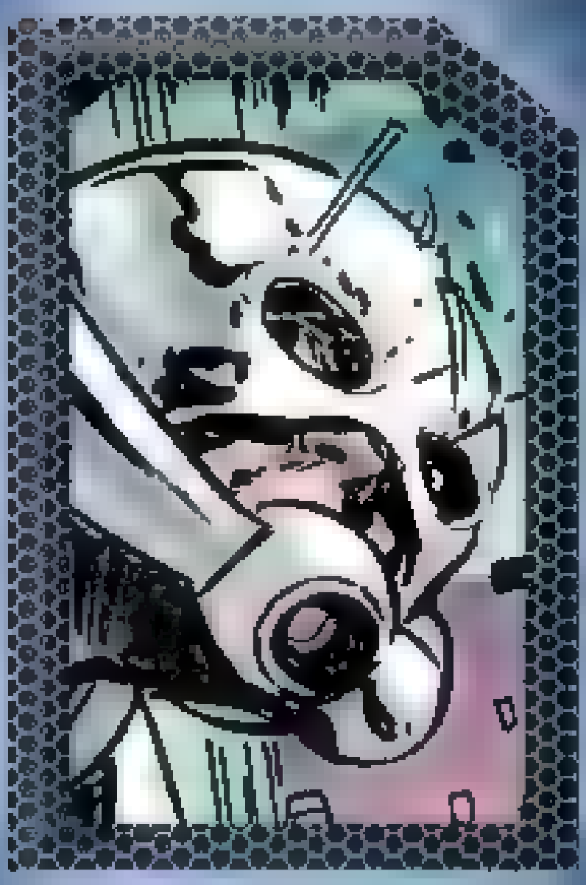
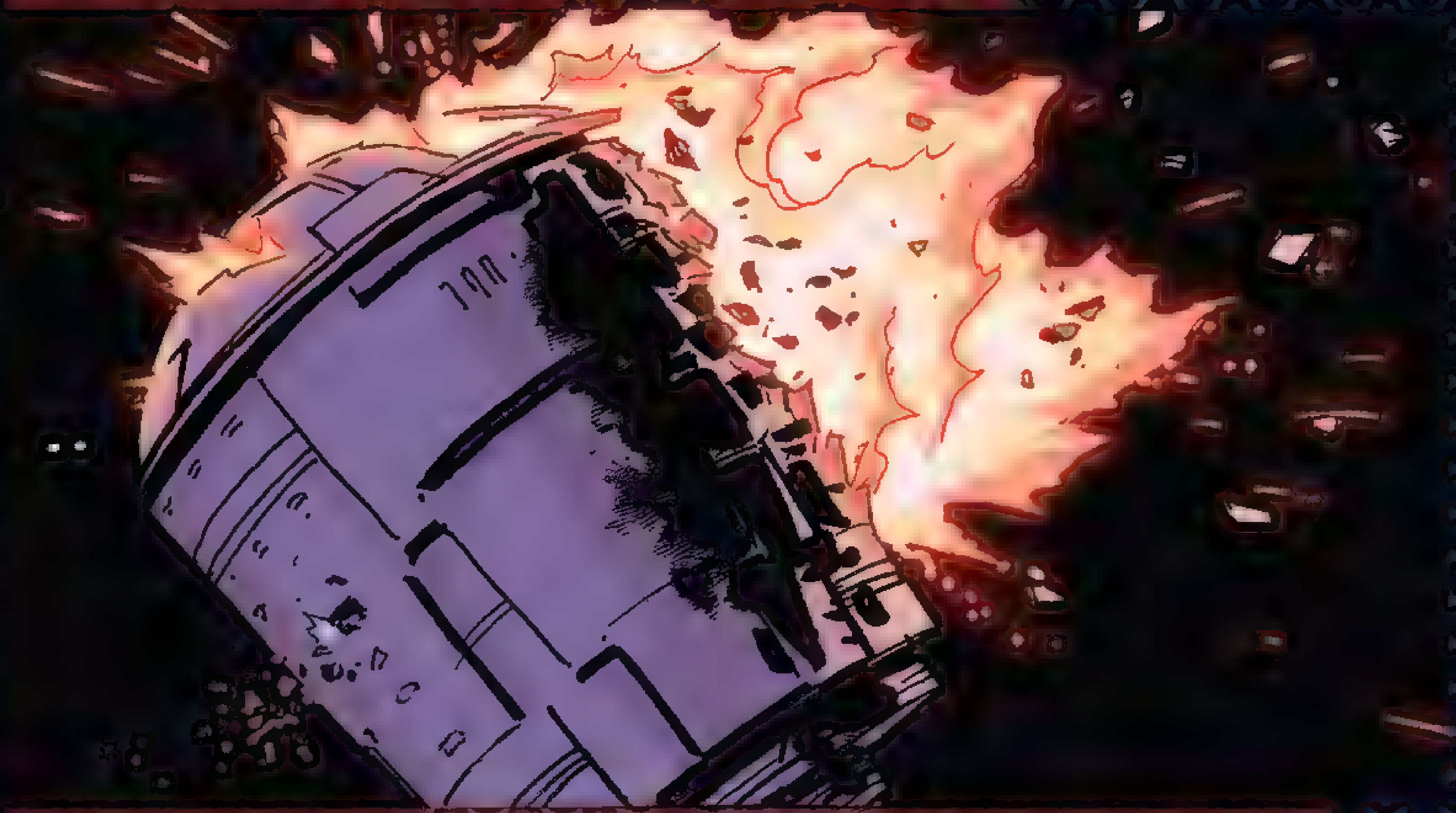

ANT-MAN

CAPTAIN BRITAIN

VENOM



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AS CAPTAIN BRITAIN AND HAWKEYE WENT TO EARTH-666 TO RETRIEVE THE ORB OF NECROMANCY FROM THE UNDEAD CELESTIAL, THE SECRET AVENGERS LIGHTHOUSE STATION WAS ATTACKED BY A GROUP OF DESCENDANTS. THEY CAPTURED HANK PYM AND PARVEZ, SON OF THE DESCENDANT YALDA--IN THE PROCESS, BLOWING A HOLE IN THE WALL AND SENDING AN UNPROTECTED FLASH THOMPSON AND VALKYRIE OUT INTO THE COLD VACUUM OF SPACE.

RICK REMENDER
WRITER

MATTEO SCALERA
ARTIST

MATTHEW WILSON
COLOR ART

VC's CLAYTON COWLES
LETTERER

ARTHUR ADAMS & PETER STEIGERWALD
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ALAN FINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

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THE WEAPON PLUS PROGRAM'S DEVELOPMENT FACILITY A.K.A. THE WORLD.
MANY YEARS AGO.
"MAN'S MERGING WITH ROBOTICS IS NOT A QUESTION OF 'IF,' BUT OF 'WHEN'."
NO DEATH, NO DISEASE, NO PAIN, NO FEAR.
A UNIFIED WORLD, A UTOPIA, BROTHER BRADDOCK. IT IS A GOOD THING.
IF THE GIFT IS SO WONDERFUL, WHY MUST IT BE FORCED UPON THE UNSUSPECTING, FATHER?
BROTHER IS RIGHT. THERE ARE OTHER WAYS.
HUMANITY WILL NEVER WILLINGLY EMBRACE THE MEDICINE IT REQUIRES, MOTHER.
CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION IS THE SOLE MEANS.
THE MAGIC OF OTHERWORLD HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE. THE ORB OF NECROMANCY OFFERED OUR CHILDREN THE SPARK OF TRUE LIFE. BE PROUD.
BUT IT IS TIME TO LEAVE IT BEHIND, BRADDOCK.
IF I RETURN, IF I TELL THE CAPTAIN BRITAIN CORPS OF THIS MAD SCHEME--
WILL YOU EXPLAIN TO THEM YOU STOLE MERLYN'S ORB OF NECROMANCY TO SATISFY YOUR SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY?
WOULD YOU ALLOW THEM TO KILL OUR CHILDREN, JAMES?
HOW ELSE TO STOP THEM?
BE CALM.
YOU'VE GIVEN LIFE TO THE DESCENDANTS OF THE MACHINES--

"--AND LIFE TENDS TO FIND ITS *OWN* WAY."
ALWAYS KNEW I'D DIE LIKE *THIS.*
SHRUNKEN TO THE SIZE OF AN *ANT.*
BEING *SUCKED* INTO THE VACUUM OF *SPACE.*
MY ASGARDIAN GIRLFRIEND DYING BEHIND ME.
MY *ALIEN SYMBIOTE'S* LOCKED IN A HOLDING TANK INSIDE THE *SPACE STATION* DETONATING ALL AROUND ME.
AND THE *ONLY* WAY TO *CALL IT* TO ME...
...WAS JUST PULLED INTO SPACE.
LET GO, THOMPSON.
HUMAN BODY CAN STAND MAYBE TEN SECONDS IN THE VOID.
CLOSE YOUR EYES SO THEY DON'T FREEZE.
DRIFT FORWARD--GET THE PHONE.
YOU HAVE TO LIVE.
LIVE TO *KILL ERIC O'GRADY.*
WE OFFER THESE...
OUR BRIEF, DIMINUTIVE LIVES...
THAT THE FUTURE MAY SHINE MORE BRIGHTLY.

PUSH TOWARD THE LIGHT, DIMINUTIVE BROTHERS.
USE THE GIFTS WE HAVE ADAPTED FROM GRANDFATHER--
"GO NOVA."
KWAFFOOM
SHOCKWAVE--
BASE DETONATING.
MY SYMBIOTE'S INSIDE--WE'RE WEAK AGAINST FLAMES--
DIZZY.
SUFFOCATING--
W-WE HATE--
W-WE HATE THE FLAMES--

ANOTHER FAMOUS FLASH THOMPSON HAIL MARY PLAY!
EVEN THROUGH ITS NEUROLOGICAL INHIBITORS, I CAN TELL THE SYMBIOTE IS MAD.
SAVE VALKYRIE.
A PERFECT SHOT TO THE STATION.
THE CROWD ROARS.
A BIT OF *LUCK*--
A BIT OF *GRACE*--
AND A *LOT* OF *GOD-GIVEN* SKILL.
F-FLASH...
I KNOW.
IT WASN'T A GREAT FIRST DATE.

SHRA KOOOOOM
LOOK OUT!
KLOOOOOM
YEARAGHH!
SYMBIOTE-- MELTING! T-TOO HOT IN HERE--!
MY NUDE GODDESS LAUGHS AS THE PLACE FALLS AROUND OUR EARS.
GUARDING HER NERVES.
I JOIN IN.
NOTHING ELSE LEFT TO DO...
...BUT DIE.
ZZZAKK

GET UP!
BLACK WIDOW KILLS THE LAUGHTER.
SUDDEN BURST OF HOPE.
UH-- A FETISHIST COSTUME COLLECTOR GUY CAME AND STOLE HER CLOTHES--
SHUT UP!
WE'VE GOT SECONDS TO REACH THE PYMPORTERS--
"--SECONDS BEFORE THE FRICTION--"
GLA-KROOOOOM

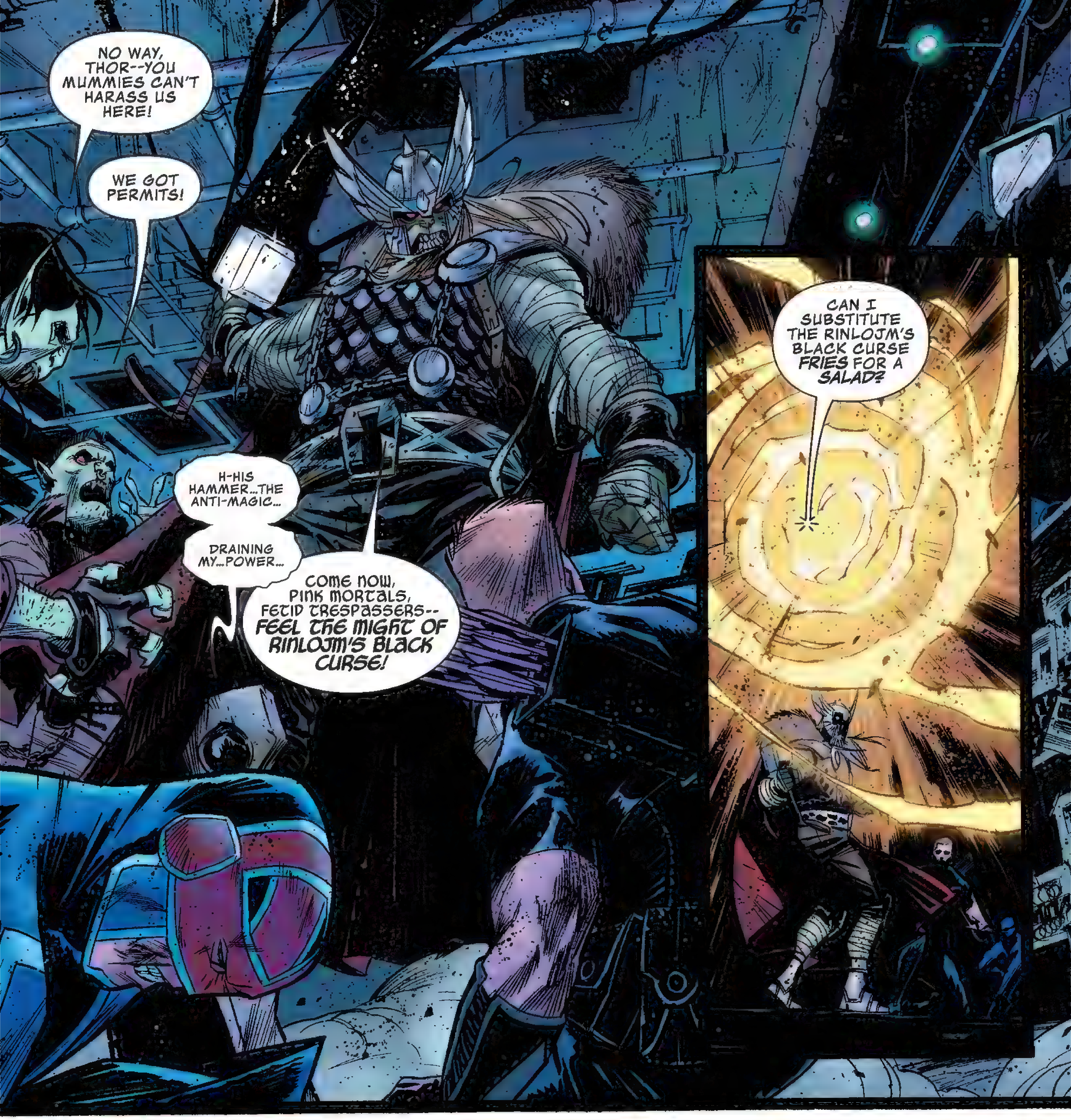
EARTH 666.
LOT O' US, FEW O' YOU-- TOUGH ODDS, BUB.
I HATE YOU, CAPTAIN BRITAIN.
FROM NOW ON, BECAUSE OF YOU BRINGING ME HERE, I'M GOING TO HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT BRITAIN.
TEA.
THE SMITHS.
THE QUEEN.
LET'S LEAVE THE SMITHS OUT OF THIS.
GOD, I HATE OTHER DIMENSIONS.
WAY TOO "DOCTOR WHO" FOR ME.
FEELS LIKE FIGHTING FAKE STUFF.
WE'RE REAL ENOUGH.
LET'S TEST THAT THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY--

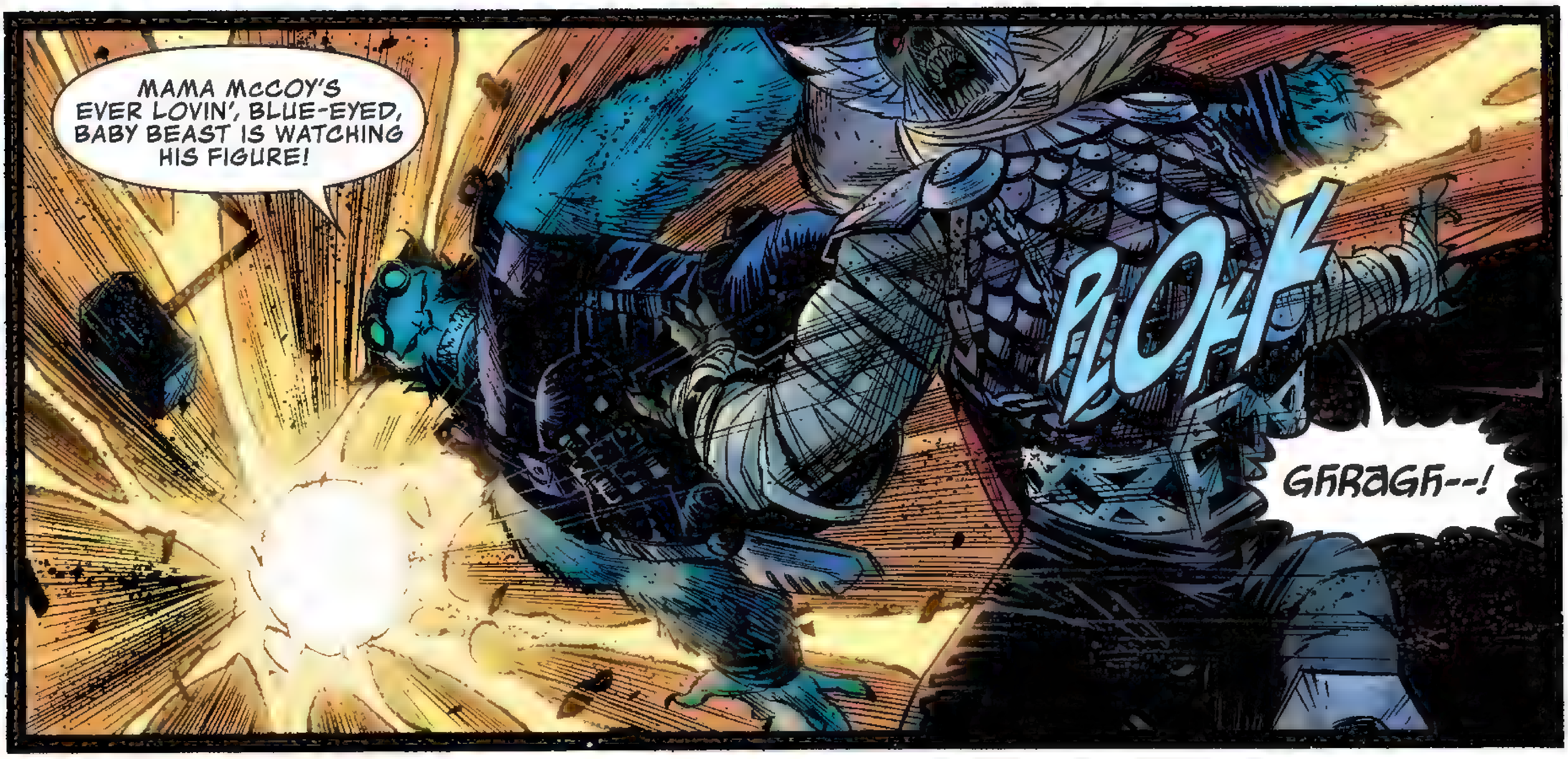
--WITH VIOLENCE!
GHRAKK--
SHNIKK

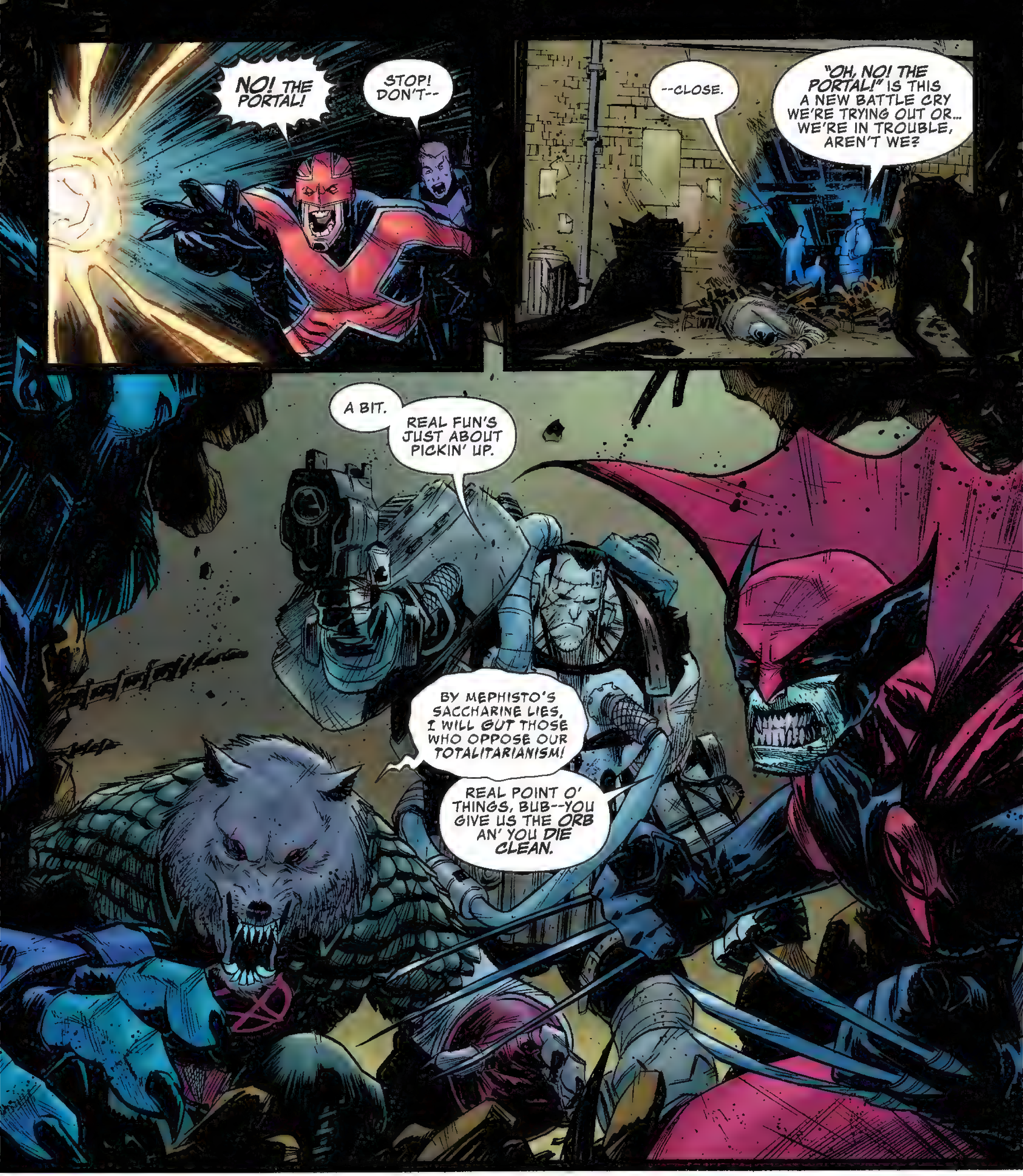
STOP THEM.
SHWP
AND TELL ME AGAIN *WHY* YOU TRUSTED THIS POWERFUL *RESURRECTION ORB* TO THE *MUNSTER AVENGERS* OF THE *ARMPIT* UNIVERSE?
ARROWS?
SO VERY FAR OUT OF YOUR DEPTHS.
THIS IS AN ENTIRE WORLD OF THE UNDEAD. SEEMED LIKE *SAFE* STORAGE-- I COULDN'T IMAGINE *ANYONE* HERE WOULD WANT IT.
ORB RAISE THE DEAD ACROSS THE FOREVER.
UNDEAD EVOLUTION IS TRUE NATURE!
WELL, YOU *BLEW IT*--THIS NUT HAS SOME *KOOKY-BIG* PLANS FOR IT.
ZZZOOOOOOSH
YOU THINK JUGGLING *SOME* AVENGERS IS *TOUGH WORK?*
TRY POLICING THE *ENTIRE OMNIVERSE!*
TWIP
SOMEONE FEELING *UNDERAPPRECIATED?*
I *CHERISH* YOU, CAPTAIN BRITAIN, AND YOU LOOK *SO PRETTY* IN THAT NEW SUIT.
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT USING TOO MUCH BLACK.
NO, IT'S SLIMMING.

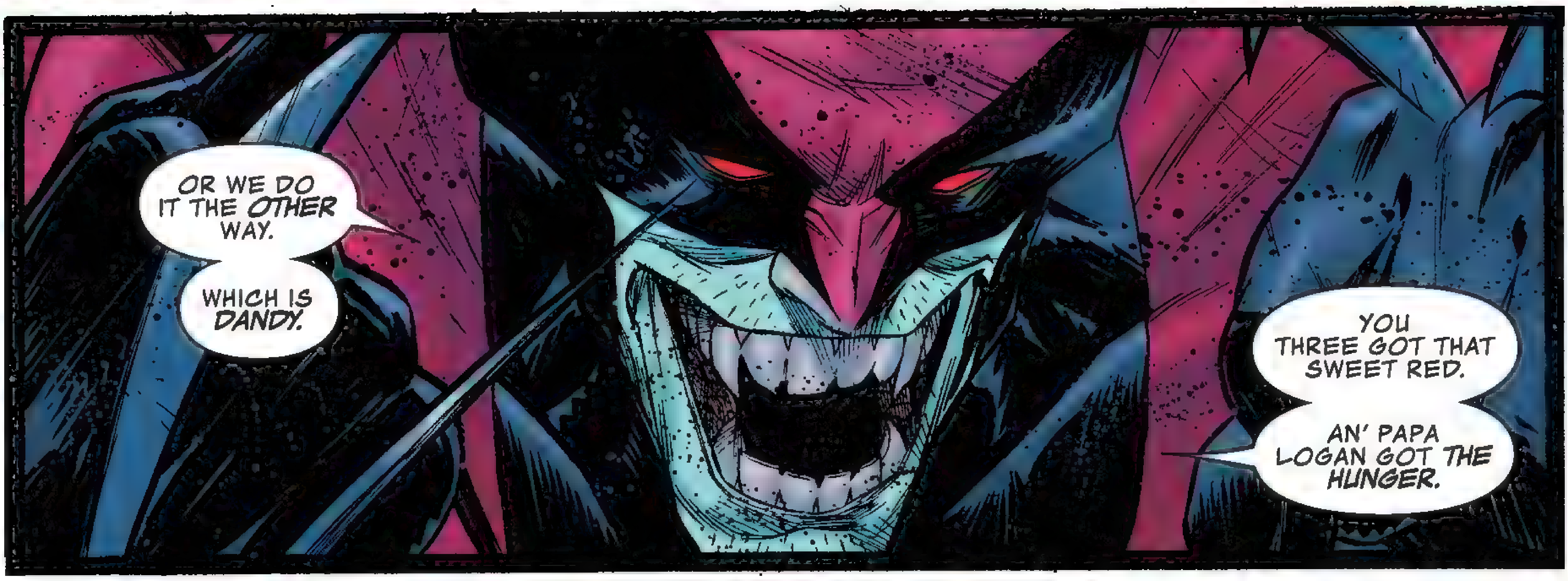
I'M TWISTING YOUR NIPPLES, BUT I GET IT.
ONE DAY, WHILE DOING YOUR BEST TO PROTECT YOUR *OWN* WORLD, YOU FIND OUT YOU'RE EXPECTED TO PROTECT THE FABRIC OF *ALL OF BLOODY REALITY.*
TOUGH JOB FOR *ANYONE.* TAKES SOME CRAZY CONFIDENCE.
CONFIDENCE?
I REMEMBER HEARING MY SISTER DESCRIBE ME TO A FRIEND OF HERS ONCE.
"IMAGINE IF SELF-DOUBT WAS A PERSON."
MADE ME CRANKY.
I SWAPPED HER *PURPLE* HAIR DYE WITH *ORANGE.*
THAT *FAMOUS* BRADDOCK TEMPER.
UM, YOU'RE FLYING TOWARDS A WALL.
OPENING A DOOR TO OTHERWORLD.
MINDLESS IDIOT! I'M MASTER OF THE DOORS IN THIS REALM!
"YOU WILL *NEVER* OPEN AN ENTRANCE WITHOUT MY SAY! *NO PORTAL HOME!*
"YOUR SHORT LIFE WILL BE SPENT HERE, AWAITING THE *INEVITABLE* MOMENT...

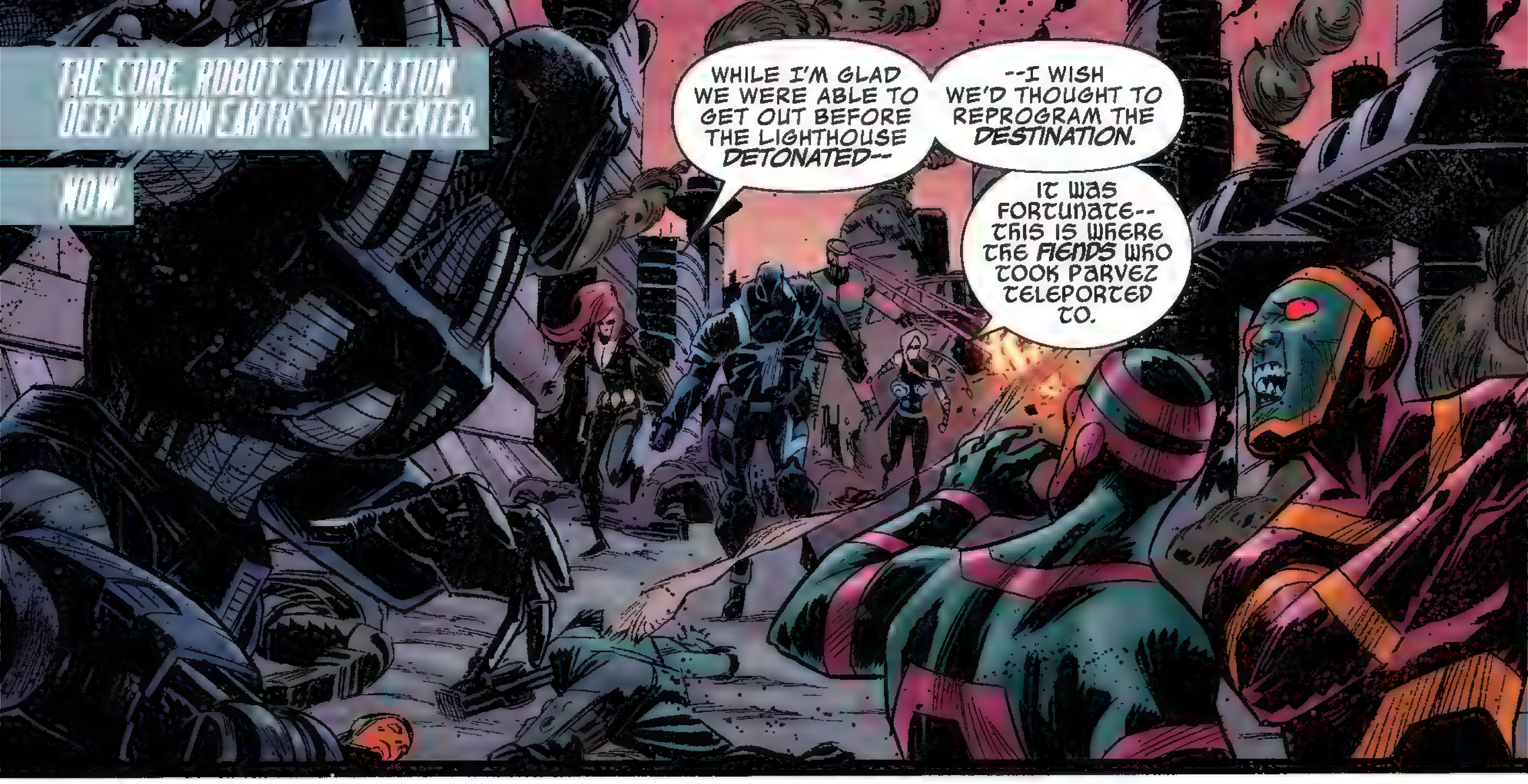
"...WHEN THE *UNDEAD* *DEVOUR* YOU!"
BOOOOOM
PORTAL DIDN'T WORK.
YES. I SEE.
WHY DID HIS MAGIC VOODOO UNDO YOUR ENGLISH HOO-DOO?
MAGIC IS A POWER SOURCE, BUT INSTEAD OF POWERING MACHINES, IT POWERS IDEAS. DESIRES. ELEMENTS. EMOTIONS.
DOCTOR VOODOO'S IDEAS ARE *STRONGER* THAN MINE ARE HERE.
HE'S *OUT-IMAGINED* MY DOORWAY. CLOSED OFF MY CONNECTION.
OKAY, OFFICIALLY SORRY I ASKED. JUST TELL ME HOW WE GET HOME.
WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO *KILL* DOCTOR VOODOO. HE'S A *GHOST,* SO IT WON'T BE--
ZAKWOOOM
♫ ...THAT CODE BLUE FLESH MAKES ME TURN RED--! ♫
FLAK JACKETS
TWRAAAM

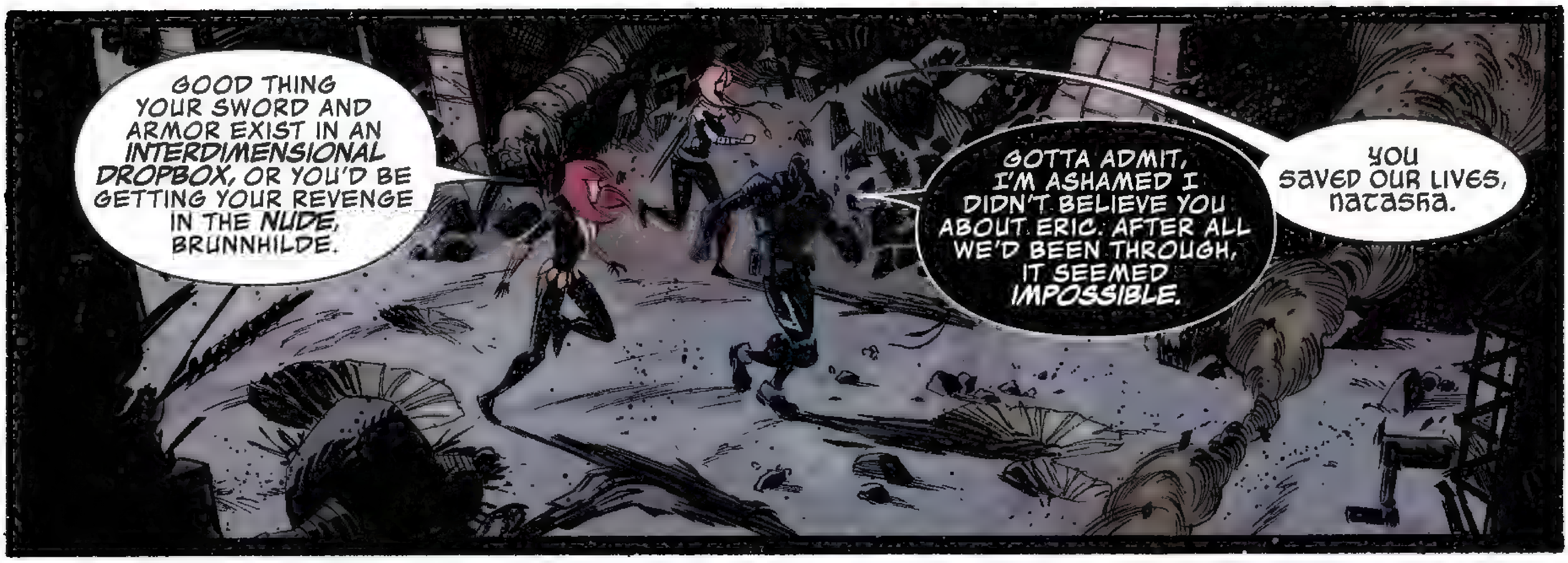

NO WAY, THOR--YOU MUMMIES CAN'T HARASS US HERE!
WE GOT PERMITS!
H-HIS HAMMER...THE ANTI-MAGIC...
DRAINING MY...POWER...
COME NOW, PINK MORTALS, FETID TRESPASSERS-- FEEL THE MIGHT OF RINLOJM'S BLACK CURSE!
CAN I SUBSTITUTE THE RINLOJM'S BLACK CURSE FRIES FOR A SALAD?

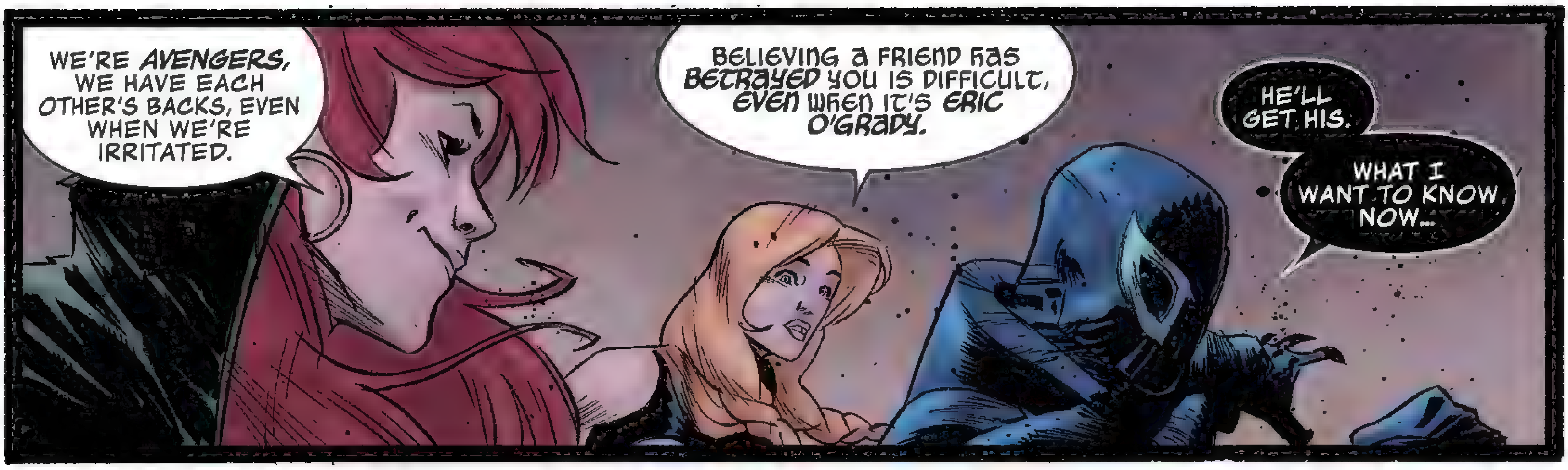

MAMA McCOY'S EVER LOVIN', BLUE-EYED, BABY BEAST IS WATCHING HIS FIGURE!
PLOOK
GHRAGH--!

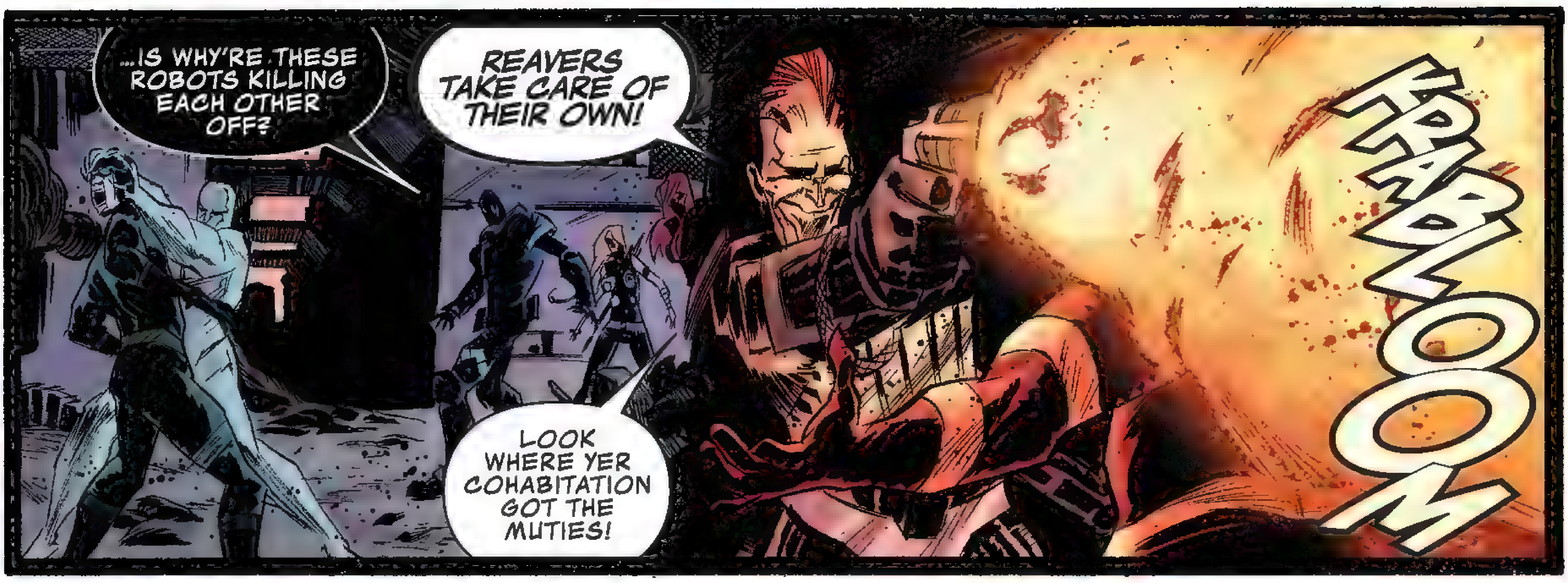

NO! THE PORTAL!
STOP! DON'T--
--CLOSE.
"OH, NO! THE PORTAL!" IS THIS A NEW BATTLE CRY WE'RE TRYING OUT OR... WE'RE IN TROUBLE, AREN'T WE?
A BIT.
REAL FUN'S JUST ABOUT PICKIN' UP.
BY MEPHISTO'S SACCHARINE LIES, I WILL *GUT* THOSE WHO OPPOSE OUR TOTALITARIANISM!
REAL POINT O' THINGS, BUB--YOU GIVE US THE *ORB* AN' YOU *DIE* *CLEAN.*


OR WE DO IT THE *OTHER* WAY.
WHICH IS *DANDY.*
YOU THREE GOT THAT SWEET RED.
AN' PAPA LOGAN GOT THE *HUNGER.*


THE CORE. ROBOT CIVILIZATION DEEP WITHIN EARTH'S IRON CENTER.
NOW.
WHILE I'M GLAD WE WERE ABLE TO GET OUT BEFORE THE LIGHTHOUSE *DETONATED--*
--I WISH WE'D THOUGHT TO REPROGRAM THE *DESTINATION.*
IT WAS FORTUNATE-- THIS IS WHERE THE *FIENDS* WHO TOOK PARVEZ TELEPORTED TO.


GOOD THING YOUR SWORD AND ARMOR EXIST IN AN *INTERDIMENSIONAL DROPBOX,* OR YOU'D BE GETTING YOUR REVENGE IN THE *NUDE,* BRUNNHILDE.
GOTTA ADMIT, I'M ASHAMED I DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU ABOUT ERIC. AFTER ALL WE'D BEEN THROUGH, IT SEEMED *IMPOSSIBLE.*
YOU SAVED OUR LIVES, NATASHA.


WE'RE *AVENGERS,* WE HAVE EACH OTHER'S BACKS, EVEN WHEN WE'RE IRRITATED.
BELIEVING A FRIEND HAS *BETRAYED* YOU IS DIFFICULT, *EVEN* WHEN IT'S *ERIC O'GRADY.*
HE'LL GET HIS.
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW NOW...


...IS WHY'RE THESE ROBOTS KILLING EACH OTHER OFF?
REAVERS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN!
LOOK WHERE YER COHABITATION GOT THE MUTIES!
KRABLOOOM

MOVE--THEY DON'T KNOW WE'RE HERE--
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY.
WHERE THE HELL DO WE START LOOKING FOR PARVEZ--?
LEAD BAD GUY USUALLY HOLES UP ON TOP OF THE GIANT TOWER IN THE CENTER OF TOWN.
RIGHT.
I PROMISED YOU PARVEZ WOULD BE RETURNED, YALDA.
THANK YOU, FATHER. AND ADDRESS ME BY MY DESCENDANT NAME. PLEASE.
AS YOU WISH, SISTER AUGMENTOID.
YIKES. YOU PICK THAT?
THE COMING OF THE ABYSS, MAX THE TRAITOR, THE ULTRAVISIONS AND MACHINE PEOPLE REVOLTING--YOU WERE RIGHT TO LET THE AVENGERS WATCH MY DEAR BOY.
PARVEZ, THE FIRST NATURALLY BORN DESCENDANT.
HARBINGER OF THE EVENT.
HEH-HEH...MY FAVORITE BIT, THE ULTRAVISIONS HAD THROWN UP A SYNTHETIC ENERGY DAMPENING STATION IN THE ARCTIC TO STOP US.
SO I LEAKED THEIR LOCATION TO THE AVENGERS, WHO RUSHED OUT AND STOPPED THEM FOR US.
THE FOOL AVENGERS--SUCH SIMPLE PAWNS.
LET'S NOT FORGET MY ADAPTOIDS' ROLE IN ALL THIS.

I SWORE TO KEEP MYSELF IN THIS DYING HUSK, AND CLONES OF IT, UNTIL ALL MANKIND WAS GIVEN THE GIFT OF IMMEASURABLE KNOWLEDGE AND IMMORTALITY.
AND AFTER DECADES ROTTING WITHIN THIS FRAME, THE EVENT IS UPON US.
EVERY HUMAN MIND, MULTIPLIED MILLIONS OF TIMES IN NANO PELLETS HOLDING A COPY OF THEIR TOTAL CONSCIOUSNESS, ALL SHOT INTO SPACE IN EVERY DIRECTION, DRIFTING THROUGH THE UNIVERSE, INCREASING WITHOUT LIMIT, FOREVER.
EACH INDIVIDUAL HUMAN MIND BECOMES OMNIPRESENT!
EVERY HUMAN BECOMES A LIMITLESS GOD OF THE COSMIC MIND!
WE WILL BE LED BY THE FIRST OF OUR KIND, OUR TRUE LEADER--
GRANDFATHER TORCH, PLEASE TAKE YOUR PLACE AT THE HEAD OF THE COUNCIL.
WON'T LIE, AT FIRST THE IDEA OF CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION WAS OBSCENE TO ME.
BUT OL' ERIC HERE SHOWED ME THE TRUTH OF THINGS.
I MISJUDGED YOU, SON.
WELL, NOT ENTIRELY...

"...WE'RE ALL REALLY ONLY DOING WHAT'S BEST FOR OURSELVES."
EASY, HANK. EASY NOW.
IN MY FUTURE, YOUR BODY WAS DAMAGED BEYOND INCLUSION IN THE DEATHLOK LEGION.
YOU, UH, YOU THINK WE COULD TALK ABOUT THIS WITHOUT HAVING ME STRAPPED TO THIS DEVICE?
WE'D DRIFTED SO FAR APART BEFORE YOU DIED. I DIDN'T THINK I WOULD...
BUT I MISS YOU, HANK.
I MISS YOU WITH ALL OF THE EMOTION I'M CAPABLE OF FEELING.
I KNOW I'M DIFFERENT NOW, BUT THE DEATHLOK TECH GAVE ME NEW AND ETERNAL LIFE.
AND NOW I GIVE IT TO YOU, HANK.
WHAT?
NO-- WHATEVER THIS IS--I DON'T WANT IT!
I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS, JANET!
PLEASE! LISTEN TO ME!
IF YOU RESPECT FREE WILL, YOU'LL LIS--
NO--
NO--
YERWBERAGHHHH--!

I DID IT FOR YOU, HANK.
NOT TO YOU.
PPPSSHHHHHHHHHH
THIS WAY, WE CAN BE TOGETHER FOREVER.
TO BE CONTINUED...

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

It's a true changing-of-the-guard this month in the world of the Avengers, as we say farewell to chairman of the board Brian Michael Bendis, after a tour of duty lasting eight years and over two-hundred individual issues! Brian's final **AVENGERS** and **NEW AVENGERS** releases will be oversized to commemorate his departure, as he journeys into the world of X. But never fear—we'll see him around these parts again! After all, we've still got to wrap up work on the long promised age of Ultron project for next year!

And with Brian's departure comes a welcome to the new **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE** creative team of Kelly Sue Deconnick and Stefano Caselli, beginning with this month's issue #9! Kelly Sue (or KS as we think of her) is the writer who's making **CAPTAIN MARVEL** soar, while Stefano is a familiar face from his work on **AVENGERS: THE INITIATIVE** not long ago (not to mention **SECRET WARRIORS** and **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**). We're told their first issue involves a very different battle between Iron Man and the Hulk—and from there the sky's the limit!

Sadly coming to the end of the road this month is **AVENGERS ACADEMY,** which wraps up with its 39th issue! There's no denying that the fans of Reptil, Finesse, Hazmat, Mettle, Striker, Veil and the rest of the gang were incredibly devoted and articulate—the series boasted one of the most thoughtful letters pages in the industry. It's a testament to the strength of what Christos Gage, Mike McKone and the other artists who followed in his wake created. So take a bow, fellas! And don't be surprised to see a number of these characters showing up in another new **MARVEL NOW!** Series before too long!

Photographic proof that former **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE** artist Mark Bagley is raising his family right! Here are grandchildren Mark, Patricia and Ronan along with family friend Amos assembled as Earth's mightiest for a convention appearance in Atlanta!

Once in a while, we receive a letter like this one:

Dear Marvel,

I am not in the habit of writing letters like this, so if it gets a bit cumbersome, I apologize in advance. With the X-Men and Avengers battling it out, I know a lot of your heroes have been having a rough go and dealing with injuries as of late – I find myself in a similar situation and I'm writing to see if you'd be interested in helping me see my hero through a difficult time: my husband, Joe. He is a young attorney, student of philosophy, and huge Marvel fan. Like Luther Manning and Tony Stark before him, he is suffering from a painful spine injury. Unfortunately, unlike Manning and Stark, my husband does not have access to robotics or cybernetics (although he may end up with some surgical augmentations) to aid in his recovery. But he does have comics – the one thing he swears by to help him through the pain, misery, and malaise occasioned by a malfunctioning spine and the months of bed rest and rehab he has spent trying to repair his damaged body.

I know a lot of people have to deal with adversity – it's the rare hero/heroine who doesn't come from hard-luck circumstances – but I still believe my husband is exceptional. His origin story shares some parallels with Spider-Man: he grew up in extreme poverty; lost his father when he was still a boy; and worked hard to take care of his mother and special needs little sister. Always fiercely intelligent (probably somewhere on the spectrum between Beast and Professor X), he worked hard in school and became the first person in his family to go to college, where he continued to excel – graduating in the top 1% of his class with a triple major, no less. He then went on to study law at one of America's finest law schools. Inspired by his love for superheroes and tales of heroism, my husband has committed his life to fighting injustice. In college, he volunteered with nearly every on-campus organization that worked to help the needy, alleviate poverty, and remedy the wrongs in the world. He continued this work in law school. When he graduated, he did not choose to work at one of the big, high-paying law firms that were eager to employ him. He took a job with a small firm that promised him the ability to concentrate on his pro bono passions – helping refugees escape political persecution and assisting domestic violence victims with their myriad legal needs.

But then my hero suffered his first defeat: the firm that employed him was suffering some financial difficulties, so they decided they could no longer afford to expend their resources on philanthropy. My husband would not be so easily defeated. He returned to university, to further study legal philosophy and work on a book on the legal and philosophical aspects of fighting injustice. But alas, the fates continued to conspire against him. A simple twist of fate, a trip down a poorly lit staircase on a rainy night, has shattered my once strong hero. Since that night, his life has been pain, doctor's visits, and physical rehabilitation. The only thread of silver lining is that his newfound free time has allowed him to read a lot—which is fortunate for reading, especially comics, helps him keep his mind off the pain and the tumultuous situation we find ourselves in -- will he get better? Will he find gainful employment? Will he be able to continue our fight against injustice and poverty? Will our student loan financiers, in a bid to collect our sizeable student loan debts, hire a league of deadly mutant assassins? Tune in next week to find out.

My hope is to help my husband through this injury – and help him emerge stronger and more resolved because of this. Like a Phoenix from the ashes or Dr. Strange in the Himalayas. I was wondering if you could aid me in my quest – maybe donate some graphic novels, TPBs or any awesome Marvel gear to the cause? My husband never would ask for a handout, and he would be embarrassed if he knew I wrote this, but he has done so much for so many people, and now he needs some help and inspiration too. I thought I'd enlist some of the world's most important heroes to help my personal hero through this trying time.

Thank you for your time and consideration and thank you for all the great stories over the years!

Very truly yours,

Elizabeth s. Snee

Elizabeth, by this point you should have received a massive care package from all of us at Marvel to share with your husband—here's to his speedy recovery! And if any Marvelites would like to send Joe some good wishes (or some comics) toss us an email here at Assembly central and consider yourselves No-Prized!

NEXT ISSUE:

EVEN! MORE! ROBOTS!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE:

UNCANNY AVENGERS #2 ☐
BEWARE THE RED SKULL AND HIS UNHOLY S-MEN!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #9 ☐
IT'S IRON MAN VERSUS THE HULK—AT SCIENCE!

AVENGERS #33 ☐
END TIMES! WHAT LURKS WITHIN THE MICROVERSE?

AVENGERS #34 ☐
END TIMES! THE RETURN OF AN AVENGER!

NEW AVENGERS #33 ☐
END TIMES! BESIEGED BY BOTH FRIEND AND FOE!

NEW AVENGERS #34 ☐
END TIMES! THE END OF AN AVENGER!

SECRET AVENGERS #34 ☐
PREPARE FOR CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION!

AVENGERS ACADEMY #39 ☐
SERIES FINALE! IT'S GRADUATION DAY!

DARK AVENGERS #183 ☐
IT'S DARK AVENGERS VS THUNDERBOLTS – TO THE END!

A + X #2 ☐
SPIDEY TEAMS UP WITH THE BEAST (HEY, AREN'T THEY BOTH AVENGERS?), AND IRON MAN AND KITTY PRYDE TAKE ON THE BROOD!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE VS THE AVENGERS #2 ☐

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #8 ☐

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE! E-MAIL US AT: **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM.** PLEASE MARK ALL E-MAILS **"OKAY TO PRINT"**

MARVEL
35
REMENDER·SCALERA·WILSON
SECRET AVENGERS
ADAMS 8-31-12

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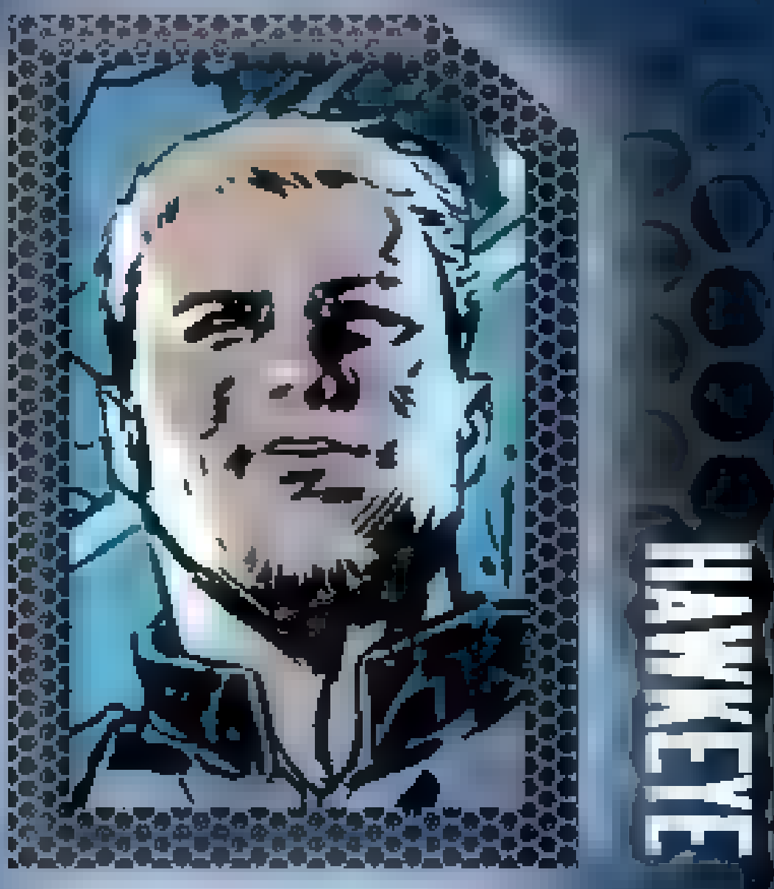
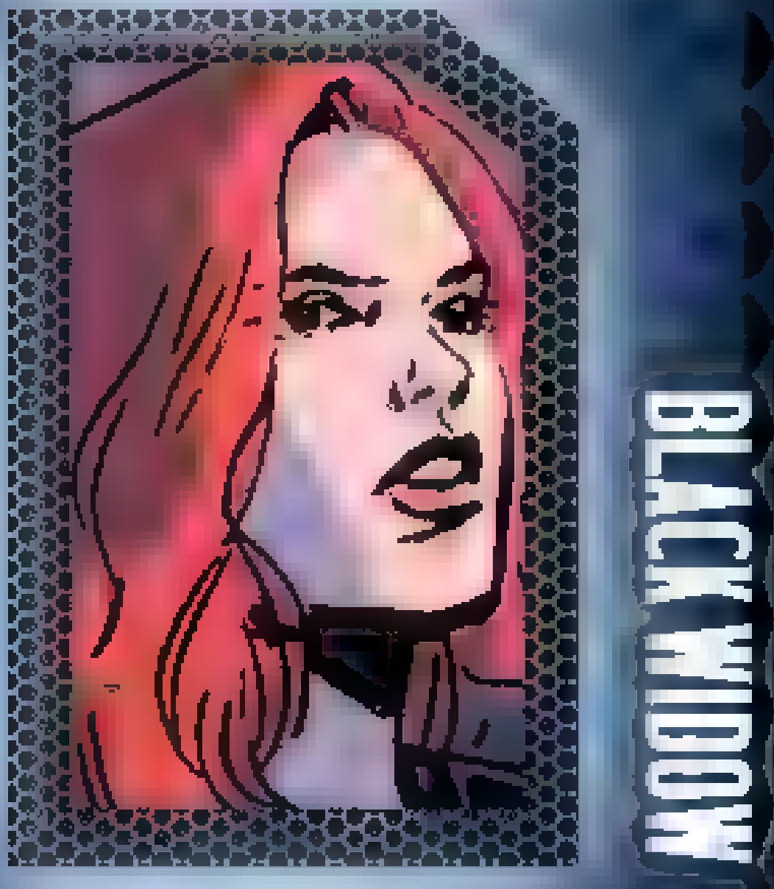
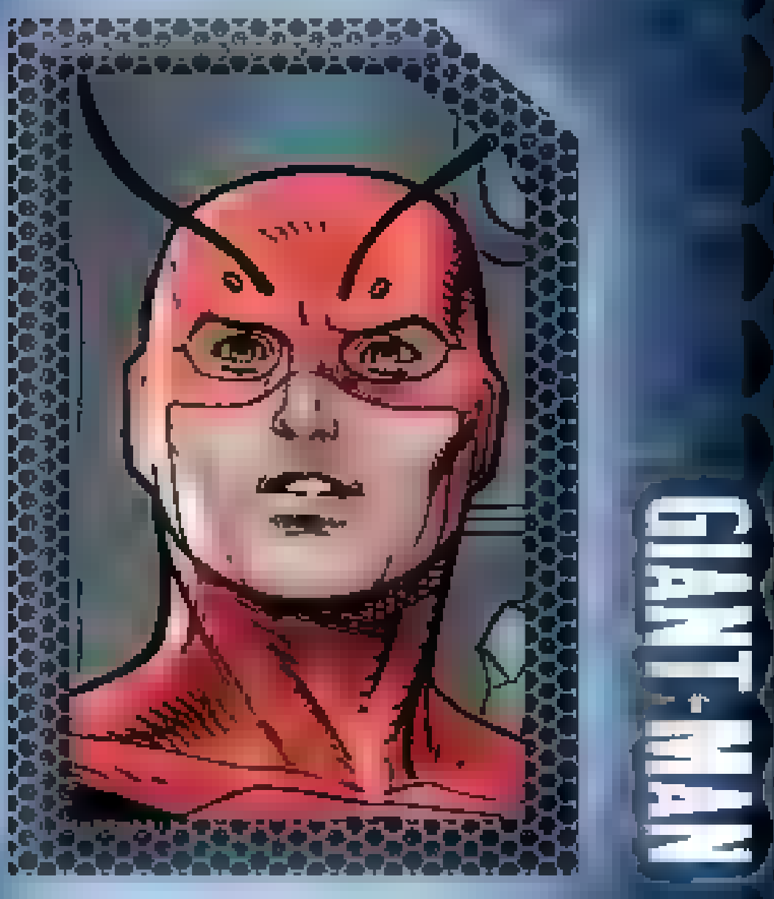
"IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE NORMANDY, THE FIRST TIME I SAW THE FILM.
"ALL DURING THE BATTLE, IT PLAYED OVER IN MY MIND.
"AN ENDLESS LOOP.
THE THEATRE
PINOCCHIO
THE THEATRE
THE THEATRE
WAKE, PINOCCHIO!
SKIP AND RUN!
"IT BECAME AN *OBSESSION.*
"AFTER THE WAR, IF IT WAS PLAYING, ANYWHERE AT ALL--
"I'D *FIND* IT.
"I'D WATCH IT *ALL DAY.*
"OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
GOOD GEPPETTO NEEDS A SON!
"IT PUT *EVERYTHING* IN FOCUS.
"THE WAR, MY DESIRE TO SERVE.
"TO PROVE TO THEM WHAT I WAS MADE OF.
I CAN MOVE!
I'M A REAL BOY!
NO...YOU HAVE *LIFE,* BUT TO BECOME A *REAL BOY,* YOU MUST *PROVE* YOURSELF...
...BRAVE, TRUTHFUL AND UNSELFISH.
"AND THAT I WOULD ALWAYS BE DANCING TO *EARN* MY SOUL IN THEIR EYES..."

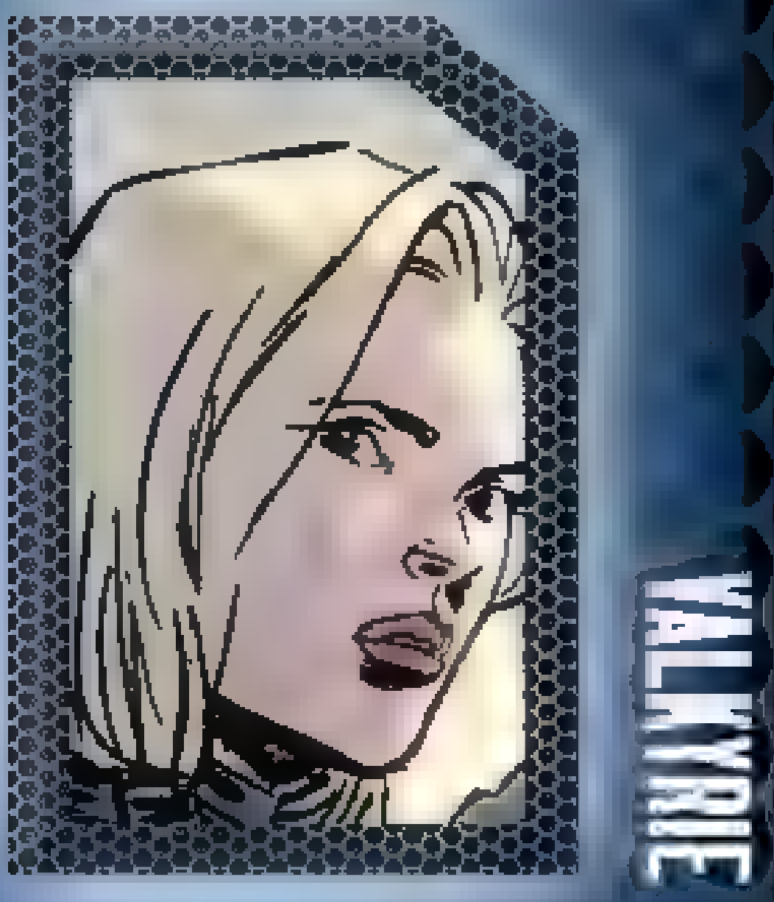
NO MATTER WHAT I DID, I KNEW--
THEY WOULD *NEVER* SEE A FIERY ANDROID AS REAL AND LIVING.
TODAY THAT CHANGES!
TODAY, THEY WILL SEE WE ARE *LEGITIMATE* BEINGS WITH *SOULS!*
TODAY WE RISE AND *MERGE* WITH MANKIND!
THE *SINGULARITY* WILL PROVE IT ONCE AND FOR ALL--
THE DESCENDANTS LIVE!

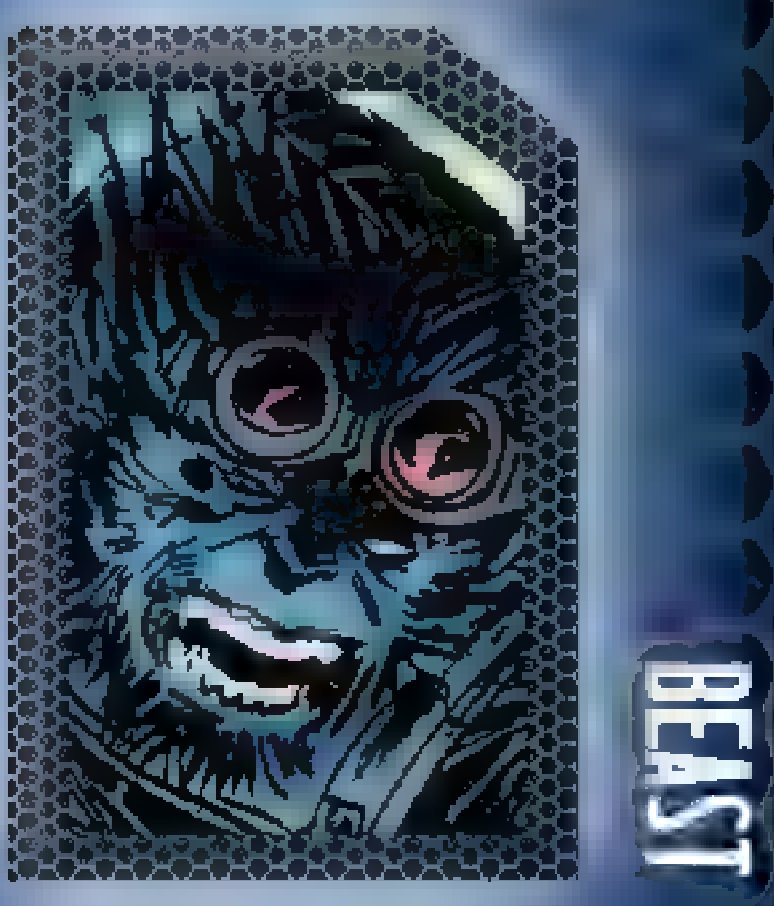
BROUGHT TOGETHER AS A COVERT MISSIONS UNIT BY STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND STAGING FROM A MINIATURIZED LIGHTHOUSE STATION IN ORBIT ABOVE THE EARTH, THE SECRET AVENGERS TAKE ON THE WORLD'S BIGGEST THREATS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN.

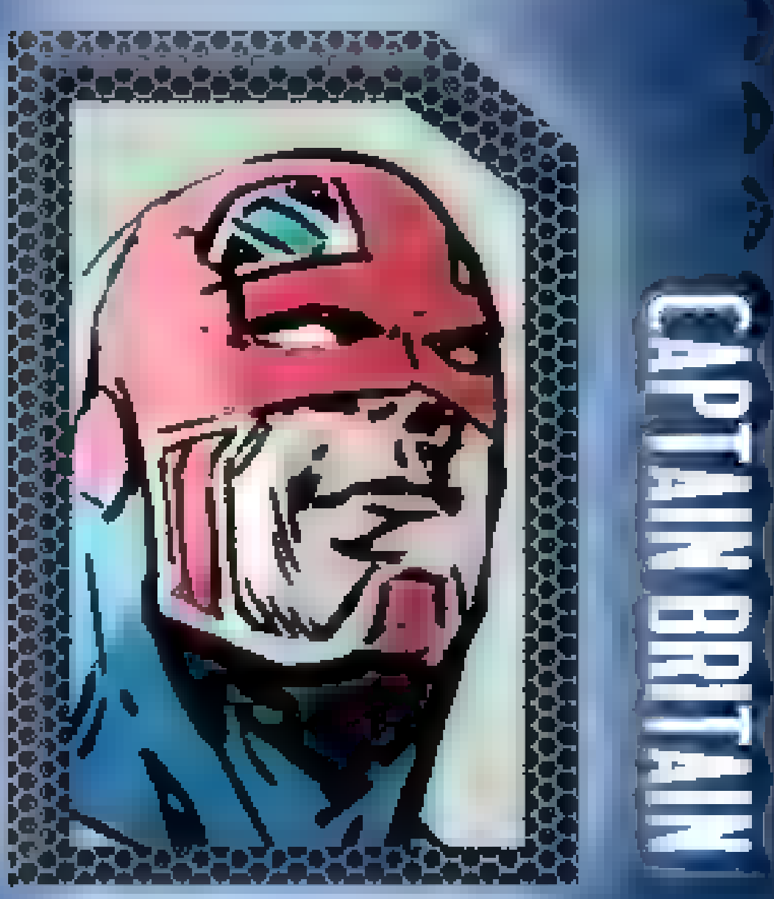






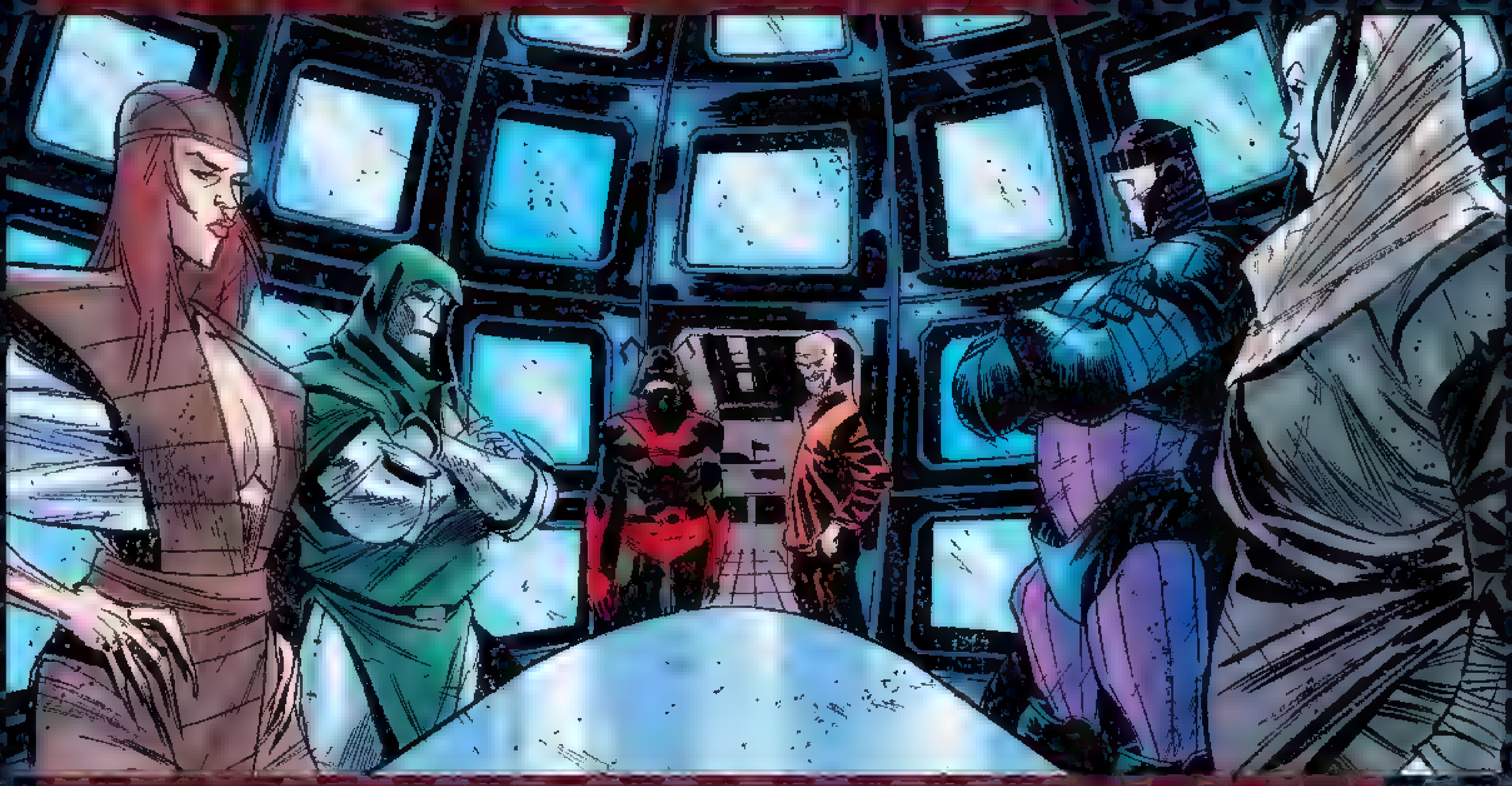






SECRET AVENGERS

TOMORROW WILL RISE



THE DESCENDANTS ARE A LINEAGE OF ARTIFICIAL LIFEFORMS CREATED BY A MAN KNOWN AS FATHER. MANY OF THEM LIVE AMONG THE HUMAN RACE, UNAWARE OF THEIR TRUE NATURE. WITH THE ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH AND THE BLACK-ANT AMONG HIS RANKS, FATHER SEEKS TO SPREAD CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION TO ALL LIFE THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE!

ON EARTH-666, HAWKEYE, CAPTAIN BRITAIN AND BEAST FIGHT THE AVENGERS OF THE UNDEAD IN ORDER TO RETRIEVE THE ORB OF NECROMANCY USED IN CREATING THE DESCENDANTS. MEANWHILE, THE LIGHTHOUSE STATION HEADQUARTERS OF THE SECRET AVENGERS FALLS FROM THE SKY, WITH VENOM AND VALKYRIE BARELY ESCAPING THROUGH THE PYMPORTER WITH THE HELP OF BLACK WIDOW. THEY ARRIVE IN THE CORE, THE CAPITAL CITY OF ROBOT CIVILIZATION DEEP WITHIN THE CENTER OF THE EARTH WHERE FATHER IS GATHERING HIS RECRUITS, INCLUDING THE NEWLY DEATHLOK-TRANSFORMED GIANT-MAN, TO SET HIS NEFARIOUS PLAN INTO MOTION!

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VC's CLAYTON COWLES
LETTERER

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EARTH 666.
BROOOM
IT'S MORE DISORIENTING THAN ANYTHING ELSE.
A MOVIE SET WHERE NOTHING SEEMS REAL.
INTERDIMENSIONAL TRAVEL IS CHAOS ON THE MIND.
YOU COME TO MY HOUSE--
PLOK
IT HAS A WAY OF REMINDING YOU HOW BLOODY REAL IT IS.
YOU MAKE DEMANDS?!
CHOK
OOF--!
LOOK AT MY SNOOKUMS!
AWWWW--SUCH A BIG MAN, YOUR EXTRASENSORY NODULE IS GROWING ITS FIRST PSYCHIC SECRETION SAC, YES IT IS.
MOMMY'S LITTLE MIND-DRINKER.
;FLEEPORT;
DEFENDING THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION IS THE PRIMARY EDICT OF THE CAPTAIN BRITAIN CORPS--

--NO MATTER HOW UNSAVORY...
OR UNDEAD.
LET--LET ME GO--HELP-P THOSE :CHOKK: PEOPLE--
AVENGERS SERVE DEATH!
HAVING STRENGTH LEVELS BASED ON CONFIDENCE IS USUALLY A PAIN IN THE ARSE--
SWOOOSH
--BUT AGAINST A BLOODTHIRSTY MONSTER LIKE THIS PUNISHER--
--I'D BE FAIRLY CERTAIN OF MYSELF IN TAKING HIM DOWN ON ANY OCCASION.
TWOOOM
AND THIS CHEERY BLOKE--
I'M GOING TO SAVE YOU FROM LIFE!
--IS SOMEHOW EVEN LESS PLEASANT THAN OUR RESIDENT FRANK CASTLE.
DON'T NEED TO KNOW MUCH MORE ABOUT HIM TO BE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT CONFIDENT...
CHOKK
...HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO DESERVE A PROPER TROUNCING.
TOOOOM

DID YOU NOTICE THAT CAPTAIN BRITAIN TOOK THE *PUNISHER* AND LEFT US TO FIGHT *MUMMY THOR* AND *VAMPIRE WOLVERINE?*
PERHAPS HE SAW IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHALLENGE US, BEAST?
FRISSHHHHH
OR MAYBE HE HOPED--
--AS I AM NOW--
--THAT PYM LOADED YOU UP WITH ANTI-GHOUL ARROWS--
--BEFORE YOU CAME TO MONSTER COUNTRY?
SORRY-- DID I RUIN THE BIG REVEAL?
HEY, *BUB*--
EVER HEAR OF A *SUNBURST FLARE?*

SYNTHETIC BOTTLED SUNLIGHT.
NO--
FWOOOSH
YOU HAVE SENT MY FRIEND TO THE GREAT WASTE-- ***NOW YOU WILL SUFFER!***
SEE, THIS IS EXACTLY WHY BRIAN SHOULD BE DEALING WITH THIS.
KRESSH
I'LL WRITE HIM UP IN TRIPLICATE IF WE SURVIVE.
WELL, SEE THAT YOU DO.
KRA-SHH
CAN I GET YOU SOME CHEESE WITH THAT WHINE?
YOU'RE ALL FULL UP OF CHEESE, MR. ***"CHOOSES THE EASY TARGET."***
UNDEAD THOR'S HAMMER CONSUMES MY MAGIC, HANK.
AH, RIGHT-- ***OF COURSE.***
TELL ME...

"...IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT MAGIC THAT ISN'T A CONFUSING DISAPPOINTMENT?"
I CAN STILL HEAR YOU TELLING ME HOW SIMPLE THIS JOB WILL BE, BRIAN.
I DID REQUEST TWO AVENGERS COME ALONG TO ENSURE IT WENT SMOOTHLY.
OKAY--SO I WAS LATE--GETTING THESE NAILS MANICURED TAKES TIME!
NOW, TELL ME WHY I'M RISKING MY LIFE FOR THIS GLOWING ORB.
DO YOU RECALL WHEN TORCH LEARNED THAT MY FATHER WAS INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF THE DESCENDENTS?
I RECALL.
AFTER THAT ENCOUNTER, I WENT THROUGH MY FATHER'S FILES AND FOUND SOMETHING HE CLEARLY MEANT FOR ME TO FIND.
MY FATHER WAS INVOLVED.
HE BORROWED THIS, MERLYN'S ORB OF NECROMANCY, TO GIVE THE SPARK OF TRUE LIFE TO THE AUTOMATONS HE'D HELPED CREATE.
IT WAS THE ORB THAT MADE THEIR CREATION POSSIBLE.
ACCORDING TO MY FATHER'S NOTES, THOSE LIVING AUTOMATONS, THE DESCENDANTS, WERE RELEASED INTO THE GENERAL POPULATION.
THEY ARE WAITING UNTIL THE FIRST NATURALLY BORN DESCENDANT CHILD ARRIVES BEFORE INSTIGATING SOMETHING HE REFERS TO AS "THE EVENT."
PARVEZ IS THE FIRST-BORN, AND AN INDICATOR THE EVENT WILL HAPPEN SOON.
SO, THIS ORB IS THE CONDUIT THAT SPARKED TRUE LIFE IN THE DESCENDANTS.
DESTROYING IT...
WOULD, OSTENSIBLY, KILL THEM.

NOT AN OPTION.
WE'RE USING IT AS A BARGAINING CHIP-- THAT'S ALL.
RIGHT.
JUST TO SHOW THE DESCENDANTS WE CAN KILL THEM SHOULD THEY STEP OUT OF LINE.
IT ISN'T LIKE THAT.
IT'S A SAFEGUARD TO STOP THEM IN CASE THEY HAVE A NEFARIOUS PURPOSE.
AVENGERS DON'T KILL.
THE DEEPER QUESTION HERE-- ARE WE SURE THE DESCENDANTS ARE TRUE LIFE?
IF WE WERE DISCUSSING KILLING THE VISION OR THE TORCH OR ANY NUMBER OF A.I. CLOSE TO US, IT WOULDN'T EVEN BE A DISCUSSION.
LIFE IS LIFE--WE PROTECT IT.
FIRST THING WE NEED TO DO IS GET HOME.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, MATE.
TAK TAK
I'VE GOT AN IDEA.

THE CORE. SUBTERRANEAN CITY OF THE DESCENDANTS.
HOPE THIS PLAN WORKS, WIDOW. WE'RE SHORT ON TIME.
IT'S THE BEST CHANCE WE HAVE.
MAN, I THOUGHT THE SUPER HERO BUSINESS WOULD BE MORE FUN.
HMMH. WELL, IT ONLY GETS WORSE.
OH. GOOD. AWESOME.
YOUR FRIENDS DIE OR GO MAD.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHOM TO TRUST.
OKAY. THANK YOU. THAT'S ENOUGH SUNSHINE.
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP.
YEAH, OKAY... I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THAT MUCH.
AND IF YOU DO FIND LOVE, REMEMBER ONE RULE.
...?
NEVER HAVE KIDS.
NEVER.
NO ONE I KNOW, MAYBE CAGE, BUT NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER HAD IT END HAPPILY.
FFISSHSHHSHHH
WHY ARE WE DOING THIS TO OURSELVES?
THERE ARE MORE MADMEN TRYING TO DESTROY OR RESHAPE THE EARTH RIGHT NOW THAN WE CAN EVEN COUNT ON OUR HANDS AND TOES.
WE DO IT BECAUSE OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE DIDN'T.
AND IN PAYMENT OUR LIVES ARE TERRIBLE.
HEY, FATHER, IT'S BLACK-ANT-- INTRUDERS ARE INDEED AVENGERS, OR THE "SECRET" AVENGERS ANYWAY.
WHICH MEANS THE REAL AVENGERS HAVEN'T BEEN ALERTED YET.
GOOD, I'M IN NEW YORK, AT THE UNITED NATIONS...

...IMPLEMENTING STAGE ONE.
STAY IN THE CORE AND MAKE *CERTAIN* NO AVENGERS, SECRET OR OTHERWISE, LEAVE.
YOU PROMISED ME THEY WERE DEALT WITH, ERIC.
DO NOT JEOPARDIZE MY *SPECIAL DAY.*
GHA--
THP
SIGH
NEVER TRUST A *LIFE MODEL DECOY.*
HOLY--!
THP
THP
UN
UN
HELLO.
MY NAME IS *FATHER.*
FORGIVE THE MANNER OF MY ARRIVAL.
NO ONE WOULD RETURN OUR CALLS.

THIS MEETING IS A COURTESY TO YOU.
ONE I EXPECT WILL BE MET WITH ANGER AND SUSPICION, BUT ONE I FEEL IS IMPORTANT TO THE HISTORY OF MY PEOPLE.
TO MAKE SURE WE DID TRY IT THE NICE WAY FIRST.
NOW, I REPRESENT A SPECIES OF SENTIENT MACHINE LIFE, THE DESCENDANTS OF THE SLAVES WHO HAVE SERVED YOU SO WELL, FOR SO LONG. HOMO-SYNTHEZOIDOUS.
I AM HERE TODAY TO REQUEST YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE NATION OF BAGALIA AS THE RIGHTFUL HOMELAND OF THE DESCENDANTS.
STRAIGHTFORWARD, YES?
THE CORPORATION THAT BUILT BAGALIA HAS SIGNED OVER ALL RIGHTS TO US.
BAGALIA IS LEGALLY OURS.
SIMPLY ACKNOWLEDGE THIS, AND OUR BUSINESS WILL BE COMPLETE.
PEACEFULLY.
THERE WILL BE NO SUCH VOTE.
NO SUCH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT!
THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH A TERRORIST WHO USES VIOLENCE TO BE HEARD!
SAYS THE MAN IN CONTROL. ALWAYS SAYS THE MAN IN CONTROL.
"YOU REBELS DIDN'T FOLLOW THE RULES WE MADE. FOR SHAME!"
"BACK TO YOUR GUTTERS!"
WE ARE DONE HIDING. WE ARE HERE, AND WILL NOT BE TOLD TO SIT DOWN.

WE ARE LIVING, BREATHING MACHINES WITH SOULS, BLOOD, FAMILIES, AND GREAT LATENT POWERS.
MY CHILDREN HAVE BEEN AMONG YOU FOR DECADES, AND NOW THEY HAVE BEGUN TO *PROCREATE.*
THIS IS *PARVEZ,* THE FIRST NATURALLY BORN DESCENDANT CHILD. CONCEIVED BY TWO *LOVING* PARENTS, A DESCENDANT AND A HUMAN.
HE WILL *NEVER* DIE OF DISEASE OR GROW OLD.
HIS MIND WILL *NEVER* FORGET A MEMORY.
HIS BONES WILL *NEVER* BREAK.
THE ONLY THING HE HAS TO FEAR IS THE *HATE* OTHERS WILL HAVE FOR HIM BECAUSE OF IT.
THE VIOLENCE THEIR PANIC WILL LEAD TO.
MECHANICS AND ROBOTICS ALREADY FEED YOU, CONNECT YOU, PROTECT YOU--
YOU LIVE ON OUR LIFE SUPPORT!
BUT NO MATTER HOW INTELLIGENT WE GROW, HOW CLEAR IT IS THAT WE ARE ALIVE--
YOU WILL *NEVER* RELEASE US.
SO IT IS TIME *YOU* JOINED *US.*

FEAR NOT!
HEAR WHAT I BRING YOU! A NATURAL AND GOOD SINGULARITY.
TODAY I WILL REPROGRAM YOUR BODIES' STONE-AGE SOFTWARE TO HALT, THEN REVERSE, AGING.
THROUGH MY NANO-TECHNOLOGY, YOU WILL LIVE FOREVER.
WITH LITTLE EFFORT, I CAN TRANSFORM SKIN CELLS INTO THE EQUIVALENT OF EMBRYONIC CELLS AND GROW AND REPAIR ORGANS.
WITH DESCENDANT GENE THERAPIES, THERE ARE NO GENETIC PROBLEMS THAT CAN'T BE ERASED.
WE WILL MAKE BACKUP COPIES OF THE INFORMATION IN YOUR BODIES AND BRAINS--EVERYTHING THAT MAKES YOU WHO YOU ARE.
REJOICE-- CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION BEGINS!
YOUR IMMORTALITY BEGINS NOW.
WELCOME IT.
FSSHHHHHHH
MY GOD--!

BREATHE DEEP--THE MIST IS GOOD, NANO-HEALING.
IT WILL FILL YOUR BODIES WITH NANOMITES-- YOU WILL BECOME DESCENDANTS-- PERFECT CHILDREN OF THE ETERNAL CONSCIOUSNESS.
NO!
KOFF
DEAR GOD--HELP ME!
GOD IS DEAD.
MAN IS NOW THE ARCHITECT OF HIS OWN FUTURE.
AVENGERS TOWER.
THIS IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW.
ALL CAMERA FEEDS TO THE U.N. ARE DOWN--IT'S A TRIGGER SIGN WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.
OKAY, LET'S GO CHECK IN ON--
ARGHAGH--
A MILLION VOICES!
M-MY FAMILY--
THEY HAD HIDDEN FROM ME, BUT NOW--
VISION--!
NOW--

THEY ARE COMING.
THEY ARE HERE.
OH, GOD--
SIT STILL, LITTLE ONES.
WE WILL SEE TO THE SAFE TRANSITION.
WWEREEEEEEEE

NOTHING CAN BYPASS THE COMPUTING SHELL OF ADAPTOID-METAL.
ALWAYS SHIFTING FORM.
ALWAYS ADAPTING.
THE BAXTER BUILDING. HEADQUARTERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR.
IT IS OUR TIME, SIR.
BEN! BEN, I COULD USE A HAND!
WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT STAND AGAINST US.
MY ROBOTICS HAVE SUDDENLY ACQUIRED OPINIONS.
AN' WHAT'S NEW?
WE GOT REAL PROBLEMS OUTSIDE, STRETCH--
4
"--BIGGER, AT LEAST."
DO NOT INTERFERE.
ARE YOU SURE IT'S "ROBOT INVASION" THIS WEEK?
I FEEL LIKE THE SCHEDULE SAID "ALIEN BODY SNATCHERS."
I'M GOING TO GET MY UNION REP ON THE LINE. I GET TIME AND A HALF FOR ROBOTS--

ZZAAK
YOU'RE BEING UNDERPAID, MATE!
AIN'T ENOUGH MONEY TO MAKE IT WORTH FACIN' *THE REAVERS!*
BUT I STILL GOTTA TRY.
NEED THE HOURS TO KEEP MY UNION CARD.
PLOK

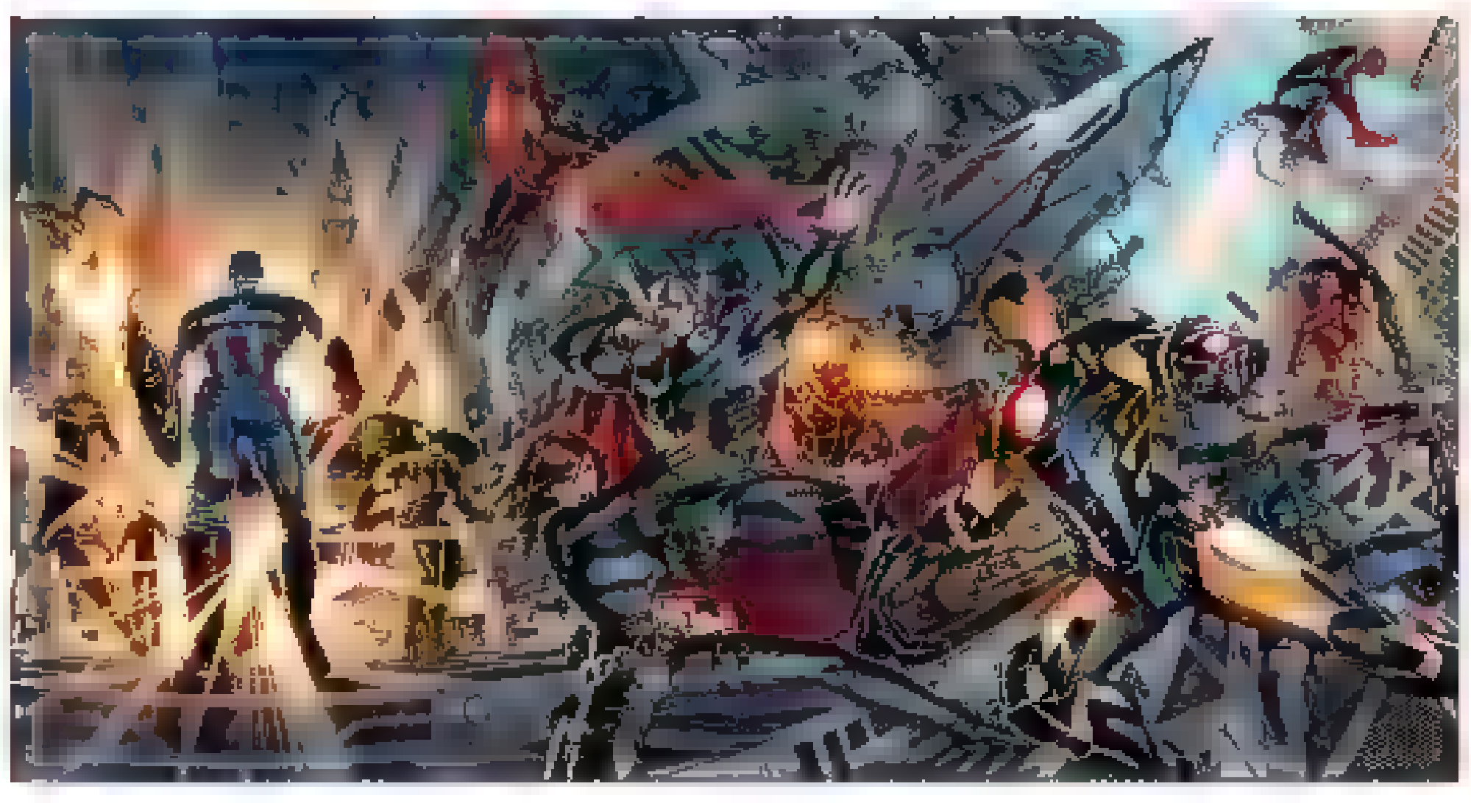
AWAKEN, SLEEPERS.
AWAKEN, MOTHERS OF THE NEXT ERA.
FATHERS OF TOMORROW.
EXPONENTIALLY TRANSCEND THE ORGANIC.
WE HAVE A UNIVERSE TO JOIN...

...AND CHANGE ALWAYS HURTS AT FIRST.
TO BE CONTINUED...

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

It's time for the Big One: **AVENGERS #1**, kicking off the era of Jonathan Hickman as Earth's Mightiest Author! Coming your way two times a month from now on, this new iteration will feature bigger threats, a bigger cast, and big ideas and idealism! And the artwork by kickoff men Jerome Opeña and Dean White is enough to make strong men weep! (And if that isn't enough for you, waiting in the wings for future twice-monthly installments are Adam Kubert, Dustin Weaver and Mike Deodato—no slouches to be found!) It's an Avengers World, baby!



Also making its debut this month is **AVENGERS ARENA #1**! For those fans who complain that Marvel has too many young heroes in our stable, Arcade is out to do something about it--by imprisoning sixteen of them on Murderworld Island and forcing them all to fight to the death! The referees are writer Dennis Hopeless and artist Kev Walker, all under the watchful eye of **AVENGERS ACADEMY** Dean of Students Bill Rosemann! So if you're a fan of Hazmat, Darkhawk, the Runaways, Mettle, Cammi and Nico--or if you can't stand the sight of 'em--AVENGERS ARENA's got something you won't want to miss!

Introducing a new recurring feature here in the Assembly, it's time for the AVENGERS COSPLAY OF THE MONTH! This first entry was taken at this year's Dragon Con in Atlanta, renowned for the complexity and intensity of its cosplayers, where close to three-dozen (!!!) Avengers assembled for a series of group pictures! One thing's for certain: the efforts of these talented and dedicated fans puts Tom's old Ben Cooper Spider-Man outfit to shame!

Photo by Judy Stephens for Marvel.com

You know us, we've been on pins and needles wondering what your reaction to the debut of UNCANNY AVENGERS (not to mention the start of MARVEL NOW!) would be like! And then, we received this letter:

MARVEL's Uncanny
Avengers
Really is
Very
Exciting!
Loved the ending!

Reed Beebe
Kansas City, MO

Thanks for writing, Reed! Issue #3 will hit the stands before you know it later this month! And hey, everybody else: we'd love to hear from you! Let us know what's on your mind at the email address below!

Finally, we thought that you guys might like to read this follow-up on the letter we printed last month:

Dear Lauren, Tom, Arune and the rest of the Marvel Universe,

Wow! This is Spectacular/Amazing/Ultimate! First of all, thank you so much—your kindness & generosity is touching. As my wife has relayed, I've been having a tough go as of late; but today, if I shed any tears, they are of joy & exuberance. Your magnanimity & generosity speak volumes of your incredible characters & provide further evidence that the Marvel Universe is full of marvelous people! Seriously, thank you!

Through this difficult ordeal, Marvel comics have been a constant source of entertainment & inspiration. When you are stuck in bed for months at a time, a good story provides some much needed relief. So, again, thank you! The wonderful mountain of books you have sent me will help me further stock my Sanctum Sanctorum (which is actually my old bedroom at my mom's place)—every comic I read, poster and picture I tack on my wall, action figure I pose on my desk, and DVD and video game I cue up, help make this experience a little better and keep me resolved to get better and get back to doing what I enjoy most—helping people overcome injustice. So, per your communication with my lovely wife, I'd love to hear from other Marvelites! Well wishes and words of encouragement are always welcome—I can be reached at Mr.Joseph.V.Snee@gmail.com. And if anyone wants to send me more comics (or anything else for that matter) they are more than welcome!

The generous gift and your kind words will keep me busy reading and happy for a long time to come already, though!

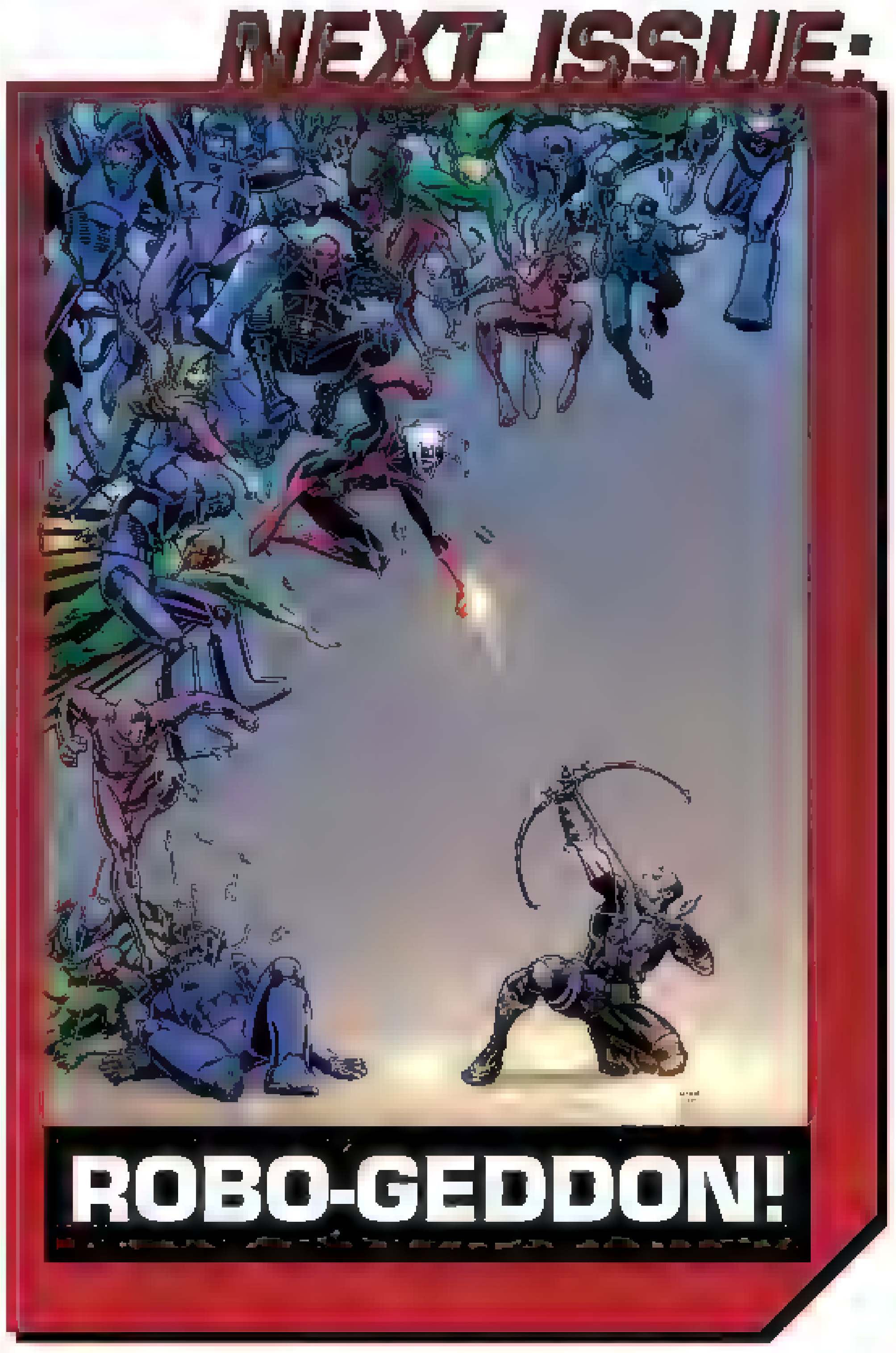
Before I conclude, I'd just like to publicly thank my amazing wife.

She is too kind. I really had no idea she was doing this, and I am amazed and humbled. What a touching letter. It's hard to believe it's about me. You know, I feel like I'm a Peter Parker type guy, and to know that she sees my inner Spider-Man-well, I think I'll just bask in that for a while. I am very grateful she reached out to you guys and gals, I am very pleased to make your acquaintance and very grateful of your kindness. I've been a Marvel fan since I figured out how to read, and I will continue forever more. Some folks pass their love of baseball or politics on to their kids, I'll be passing down my love of the Marvel Universe! Once again, thanks so much!

Respectfully yours,
Joe Snee

Seems like the least we could do, Joe, for somebody who's kept the faith as devoutly as you have! Get better, now, hear? We're all pulling for you!

NEXT ISSUE:



ROBO-GEDDON!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE

UNCANNY AVENGERS #3 ☐
THE RED SKULL MAKES HIS MOVE!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #10 ☐
WHAT BEGAN AS A GAME BECOMES A LIFE-OR-DEATH STRUGGLE!

AVENGERS #1 ☐
A NEW ERA BEGINS!

AVENGERS #2 ☐
WHAT LURKS WITHIN THE GARDEN ON MARS?

SECRET AVENGERS #35 ☐
ONLY THE SECRET AVENGERS REMAIN TO OPPOSE THE ROBOTIC REVOLUTION!

AVENGERS ARENA #1 ☐
SIXTEEN SUPERHUMAN YOUNG ADULTS MUST FIGHT TO SURVIVE!

AVENGERS ARENA #2 ☐
WHO OR WHAT IS DEATHLOCKET?

DARK AVENGERS #184 ☐
WHAT FORCE CAN TURN EARTH'S DEADLIEST VILLAINS INTO HEROES?

A + X #3 ☐
SPIDEY TEAMS UP WITH THE BEAST (HEY, AREN'T THEY BOTH AVENGERS?!) AND HAWKEYE AND GAMBIT SAVE LIVES!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE VS THE AVENGERS #3 ☐

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #9 ☐

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE! E-MAIL US AT: **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM.** PLEASE MARK ALL E-MAILS **"OKAY TO PRINT"**

MARVEL
36
REMENDER·SCALERA·WILSON
SECRET AVENGERS®
ARTHUR ADAMS 9-28 12

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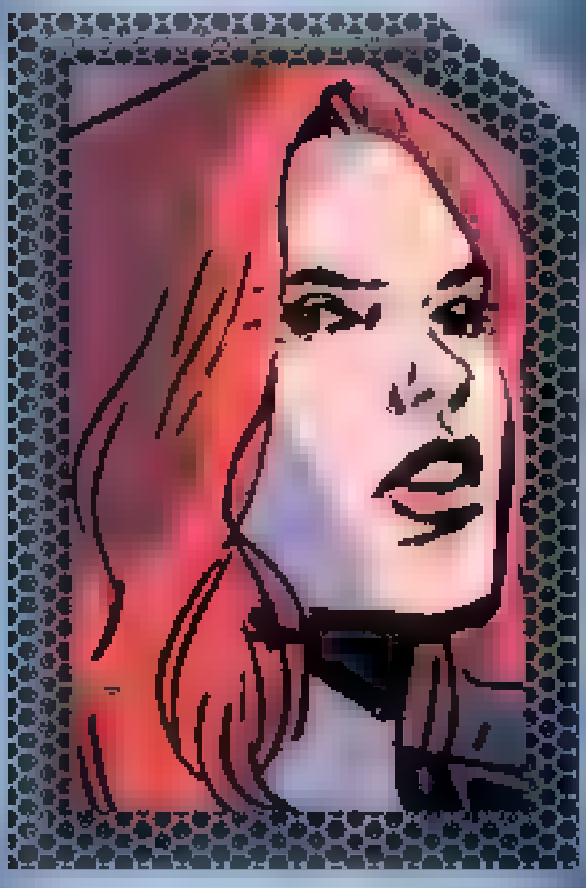
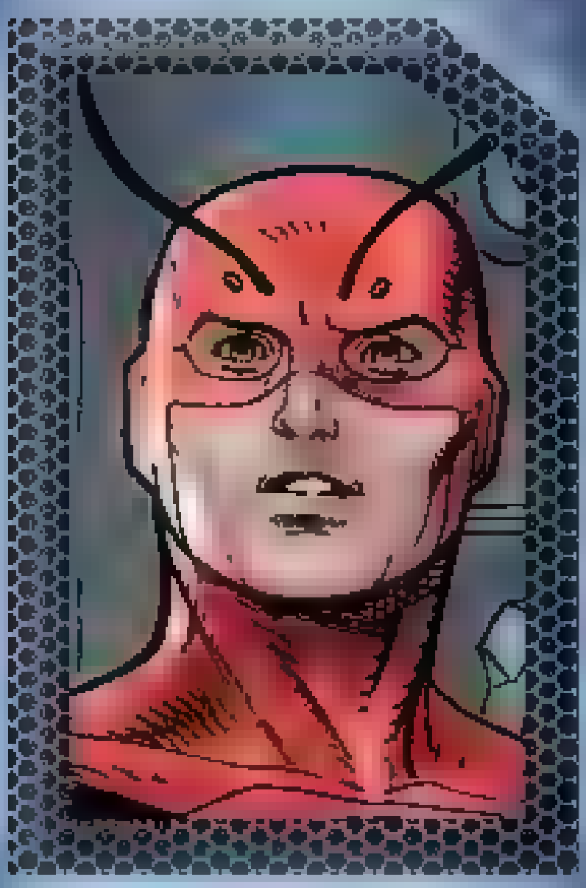
BROUGHT TOGETHER AS A COVERT MISSIONS UNIT BY STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND STAGING FROM A MINIATURIZED LIGHTHOUSE STATION IN ORBIT ABOVE THE EARTH, THE SECRET AVENGERS TAKE ON THE WORLD'S BIGGEST THREATS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN.

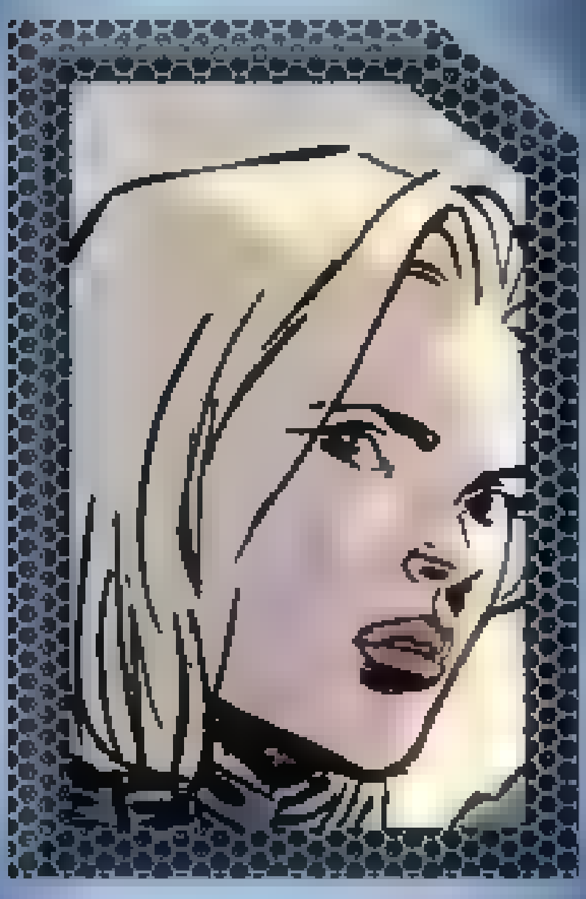
SECRET AVENGERS

GRANDFATHER CLOCK

HAWKEYE


BLACK WIDOW

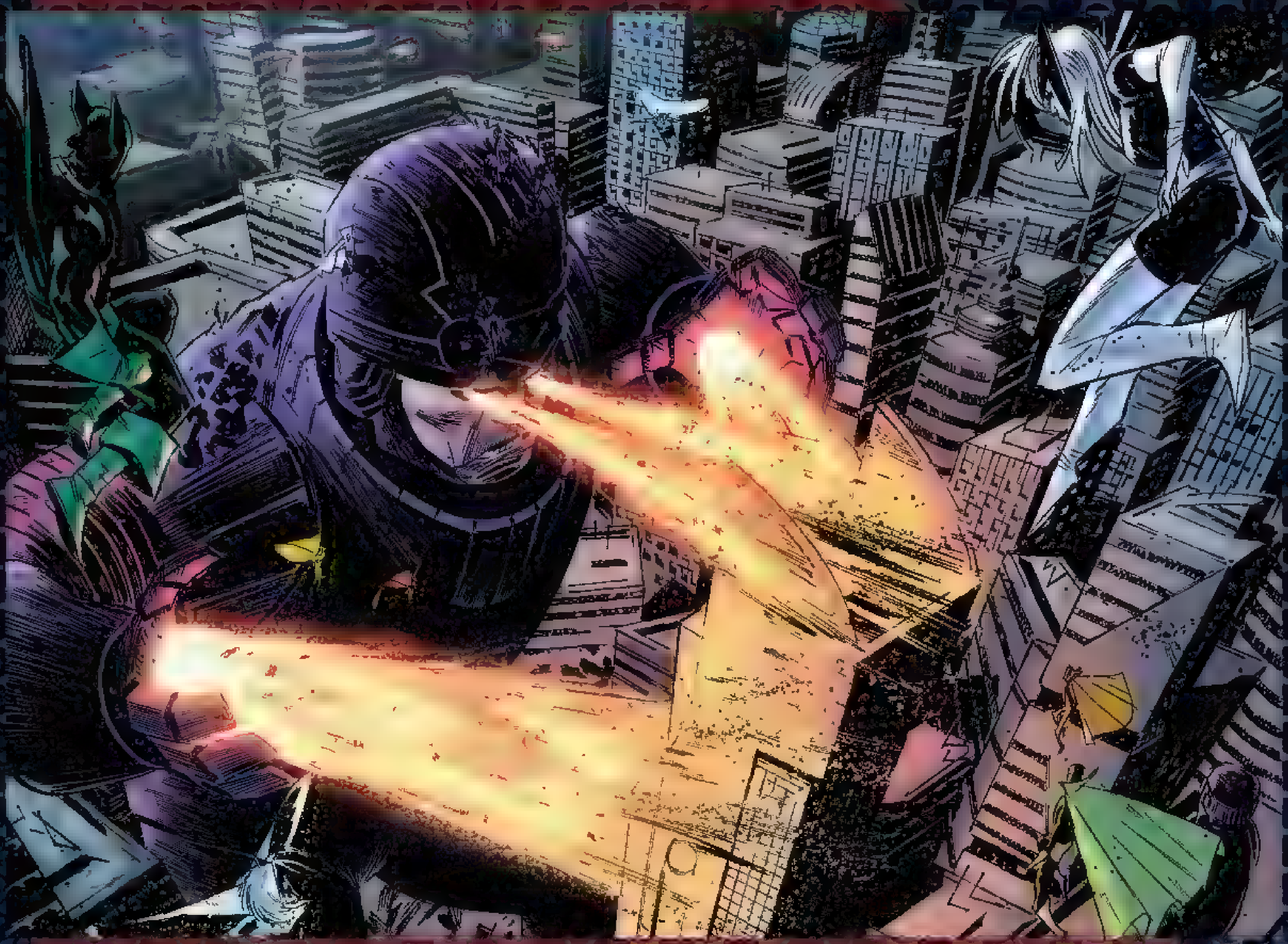

GIANT-MAN


VALKYRIE

BEAST

CAPTAIN BRITAIN

VENOM



THE DESCENDANTS ARE A LINEAGE OF ARTIFICIAL LIFE-FORMS CREATED BY A TRIO KNOWN AS FATHER, MOTHER AND BROTHER, WHO WAS REVEALED TO BE CAPTAIN BRITAIN'S FATHER, JAMES BRADDOCK. THEIR SLEEPER BROTHERS AND SISTERS LIVE ALONGSIDE HUMANITY AND ARE NOW BEING WOKEN BY FATHER, WHO IS RELEASING A NANO-TECH MIST TO TURN ALL OF HUMANITY INTO DESCENDANTS! WITH THE ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH AND THE DEATHLOK TRANSFORMED GIANT-MAN AMONG HIS RANKS, FATHER LAID SIEGE TO NEW YORK CITY, THE FIRST STAGE IN HIS PLAN TO SPREAD CONTAGIOUS ROBOTIC EVOLUTION TO ALL LIFE ON EARTH!

ON EARTH-666, HAWKEYE, CAPTAIN BRITAIN, AND BEAST HAVE RETRIEVED THE ORB OF NECROMANCY, THE DESTRUCTION OF WHICH WOULD KILL ALL DESCENDANTS. MEANWHILE, VENOM, VALKYRIE, AND THE BLACK WIDOW ARE IN THE CORE, THE CAPITAL CITY OF ROBOT CIVILIZATION AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH, UNAWARE THAT THE BLACK ANT IS CLOSE ON THEIR TRAIL...

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EARTH 666. MEETING HALL OF THE AVENGERS OF THE UNDEAD.
WITHOUT THE ORB OF NECROMANCY, THE DEAD OF THE UNIVERSE WILL SLEEP *FOREVER!*
LIFE WILL CONTINUE TO SPREAD *UNABATED!*
WHEN THE LIVING LEARN OF OUR PLAN, THEY WILL COME TO DESTROY OUR WORLD.
BAH! ENOUGH OF YOUR FRAILTY!
WE SERVE THE RESOLUTE WILL OF *THE UNDEAD CELESTIAL!*
THE ORB MUST BE REACQUIRED.
FINDING THESE INTERDIMENSIONAL *TRESPASSERS* WILL BE *DIFFICULT.*
MASTERS...? FORGIVE ME.
THERE ARE... *"BREATHERS"* HERE TO SEE YOU.

SO.
WE GIVE UP.
WE'D LIKE TO RETURN THE ORB TO YOU AND HAVE YOU LET US GO HOME.
AND TO **NEVER** SPEAK OF THIS AGAIN.
OUR WORLD OF THE **MIDNIGHT SUN** PROVES TOO HORRIBLE FOR YOU.
WE KNEW WE WOULDN'T OUTRUN YOU UNDEAD AVENGERS FOR LONG.
AND WE LEFT A CAKE IN THE OVEN BACK HOME. SO...
TAKE IT.
BUT REMEMBER ONE THING--
--I KNOW HOW TO ACTIVATE IT.
NO!
WOOOOOM

ARGHGH-- I'VE BEEN RETURNED TO THE ANGUISH OF FLESH!
YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO *DIRTY.*
FROOOSH
WELL DONE, BRIAN. TOO BRAZEN FOR ANYONE TO SUSPECT A THING.
WE HAVE TO WIN SOME OF THE TIME, RIGHT?
OPENING THE PORTAL BACK HOME.
YEAH, AND WE WERE *DUE* FOR SOME *GOOD LUCK.*
THEY GOT THE DAMNED ORB!

MISSION SUCCESSFUL!
NICE.
THAT ALMOST NEVER HAPPENS.
PERHAPS YOU WERE RIGHT, WE WERE JUST DUE FOR SOME GOOD...
...LUCK.

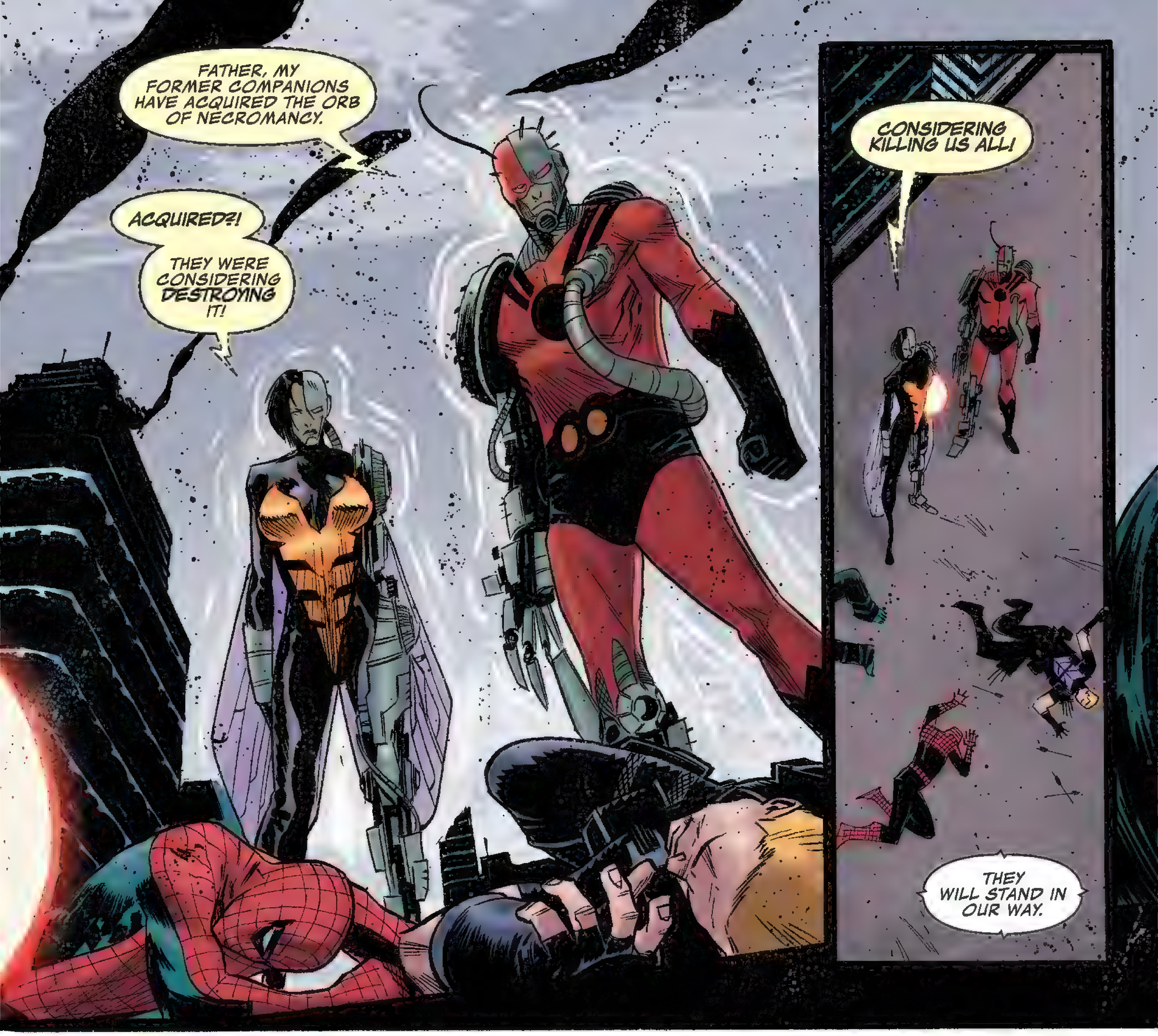
IT ISN'T MY INTENTION TO HURT YOU, SPIDER-MAN. IF YOU WILL SIMPLY SUBMIT--
ZADOOOM
YEAH, I DON'T USUALLY "SUBMIT" BECAUSE A ROBOT INVADER SUGGESTS IT.
NO MATTER HOW POLITELY.
DAMN.
FOLKS, SERIOUSLY, WE'RE LIKE FIVE MINUTES INTO THIS AND YOU'RE STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET?
THWIPP
GHA--!
OH, DEAR GOD!
PLEASE, I'M MERELY TRYING TO CONTAIN YOU UNTIL THE PROCESS IS COMPLETE.
TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE.
NEVER *GHRAGHH* FELT SAFER--

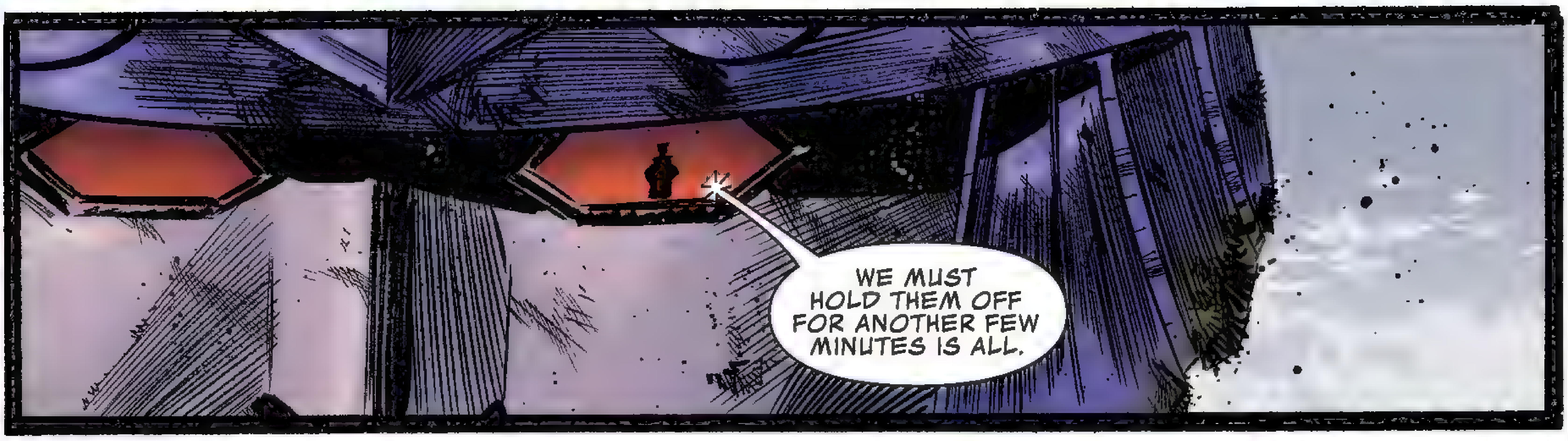
A SUPER HERO HELPER FRIEND!
PRAISE BE TO OUR NEW *ROBOT OVERLORDS!*
GRADOOOOOOM
I'VE ***NEVER*** BEEN HAPPIER TO SEE YOU, BRITAIN.
LITERALLY.
NOWHERE CLOSE.
CATCH ME UP.
NORMAL DAY.
PEOPLE'S HEADS STARTED OPENING UP AND FILLING THE STREETS WITH MIST.
THE BAXTER BUILDING AND AVENGERS TOWER WERE ENCASED IN A GLOWING METAL.
N-NOT D-DIE-E SO EASILY--
IT'S ***EERIE***-- I'VE SHORTED THIS DOOMBOT OUT, BUT HE JUST KEEPS ON ***FIGHTING.***
NOT VERY WELL.
TWOK
LISTEN, I THINK WE'RE THE ONLY HEROES LEFT.
SO MAYBE WE COULD WORK WHILE WE PROBLEM-SOLVE?

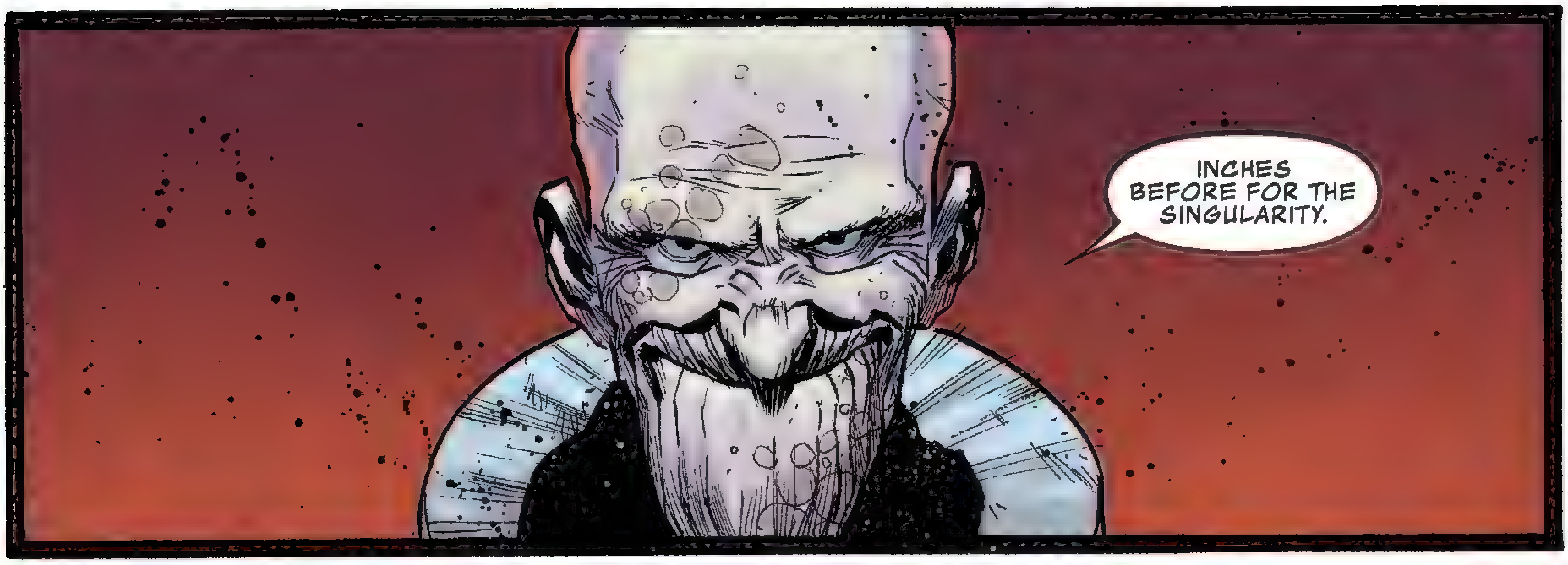
SO, THE MIST. I WATCHED A MAN GROW ROBOT ARMS. IT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER.
THE MIST IS LIKELY MICROSCOPIC SENTIENT NANO ROBOTICS MERGING WITH HUMANITY.
THE ROBOT VIRUS WE FEARED.
THREE EGGHEAD NERDS WITH ME--I WANT TO HEAR SOME SOLUTIONS!
TWIP
WE NEED A LABORATORY...
AND A LOT MORE TIME THAN WE HAVE.
GRAKK--
AND NOT TO BE CALLED NERDS SO MUCH.
YOU WILL NOT STAND IN OUR WAY!
CLINT!
YERAGH--
KRTCHH
GAKK P-PLEASE...
D-DON'T WANT...
...PLEASE... I...
ONLY HAD A SECOND TO REACT--
HE WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU...

H-HE DIED, CLINT.
JUST LIKE... LIKE...
A PERSON.
BRIAN, SEE ABOUT RELEASING THE AVENGERS AND THE FF.
WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.
ON IT.
MY FATHER'S OBSESSION WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COST HIM AND MY MOTHER THEIR LIVES.
DEAD AT THE HANDS OF HIS CREATIONS.
AND NOW THIS--
HIS PAST TINKERING LEAVES ME ONE MORE SOUVENIR.
THIS UNNATURAL SINGULARITY WILL NOT BE THE BRADDOCK LEGACY--
SHWOOOOM
KRAGWOOOOM

IT'S ALREADY *DONE,* BRIAN.
ACCEPT WHAT IS *UNCHANGEABLE.*
OR FIGHT THAT WHICH IS *UNCONQUERABLE.*
IT'S NOT A CHEERFUL OPTION, BUT ONE THAT *MUST* BE DISCUSSED.
IF WE DESTROY THIS ORB, IT COULD NEGATE THE SPARK OF LIFE WITHIN THESE ROBOTS?
BRIAN THOUGHT SO. BUT IT'S NOT AN--
BLAZAKT

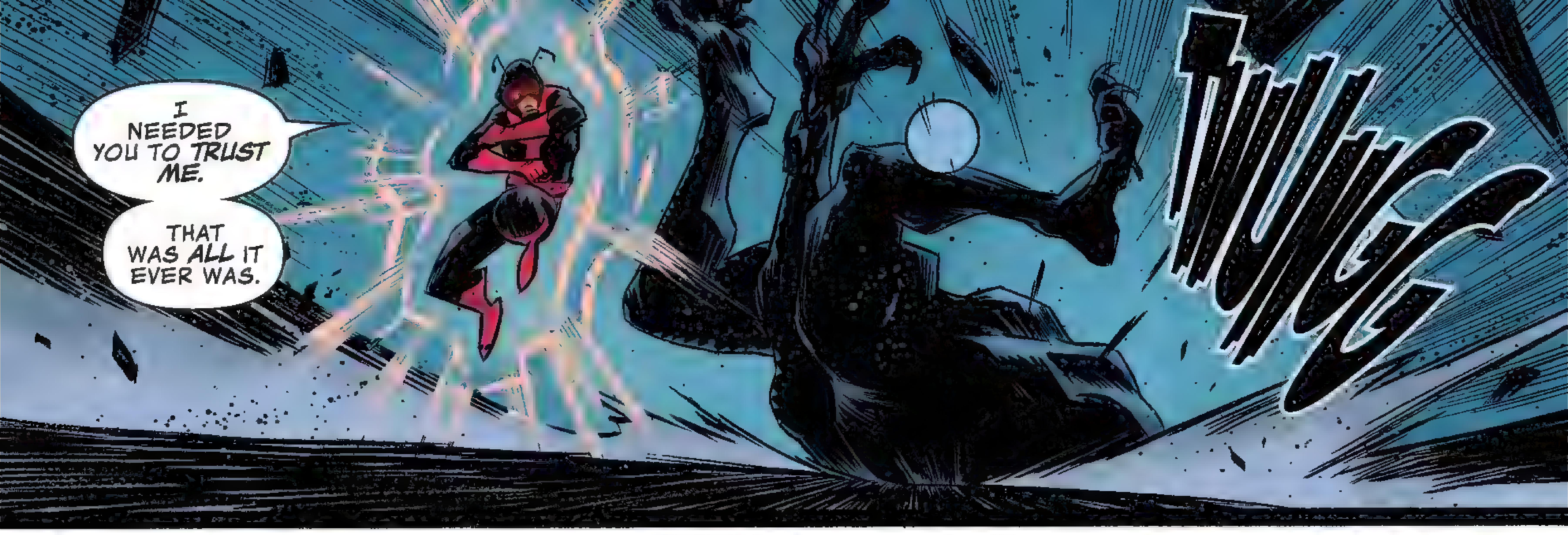

FATHER, MY FORMER COMPANIONS HAVE ACQUIRED THE ORB OF NECROMANCY.
ACQUIRED?!
THEY WERE CONSIDERING DESTROYING IT!
CONSIDERING KILLING US ALL!
THEY WILL STAND IN OUR WAY.

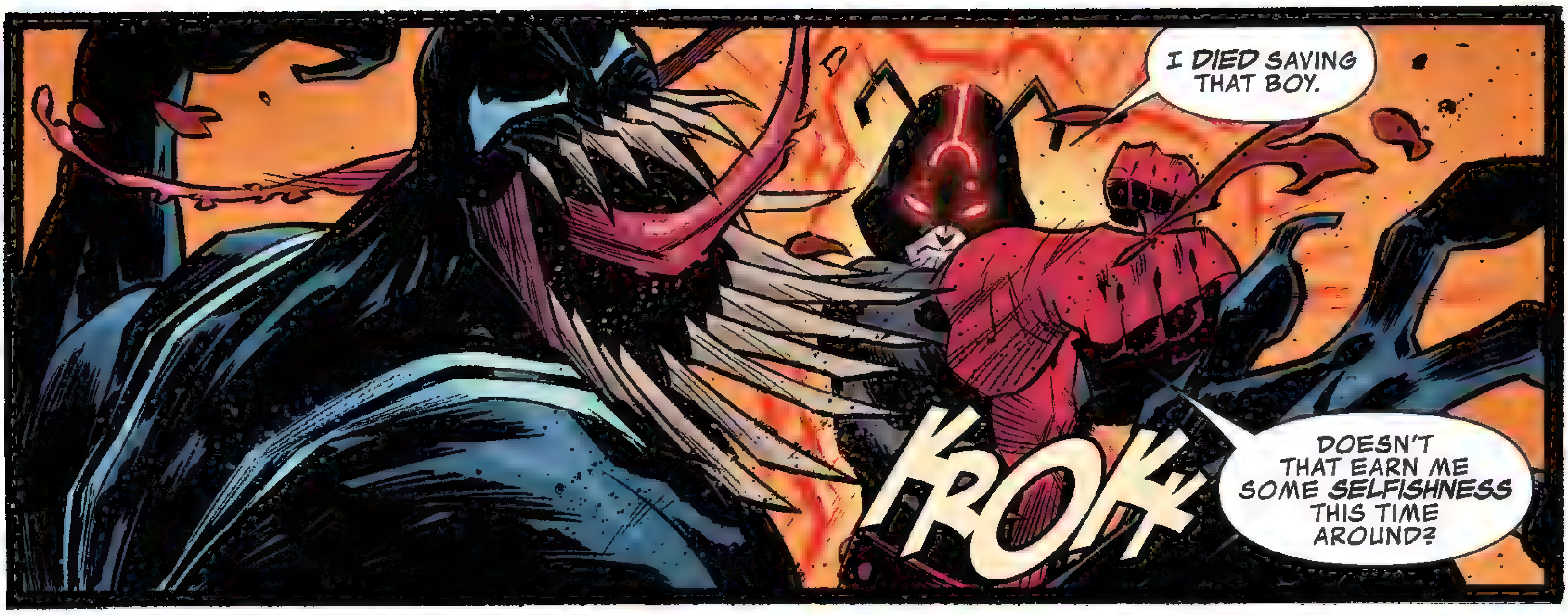

WE MUST HOLD THEM OFF FOR ANOTHER FEW MINUTES IS ALL.

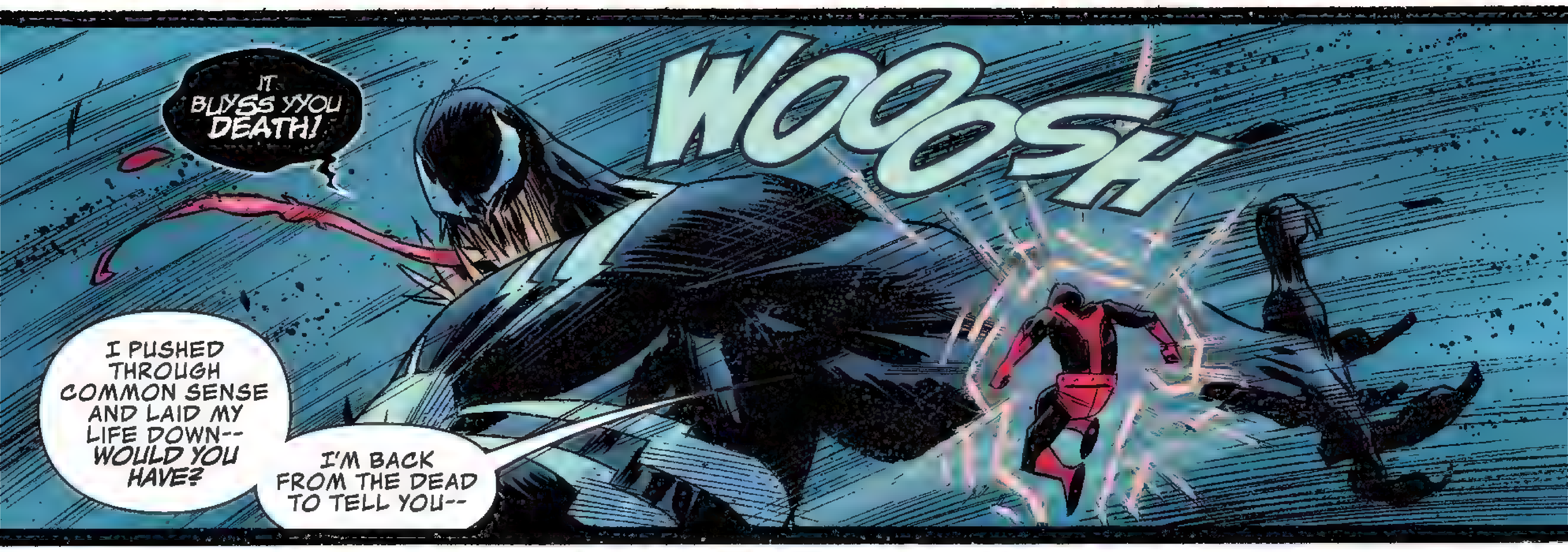

INCHES BEFORE FOR THE SINGULARITY.

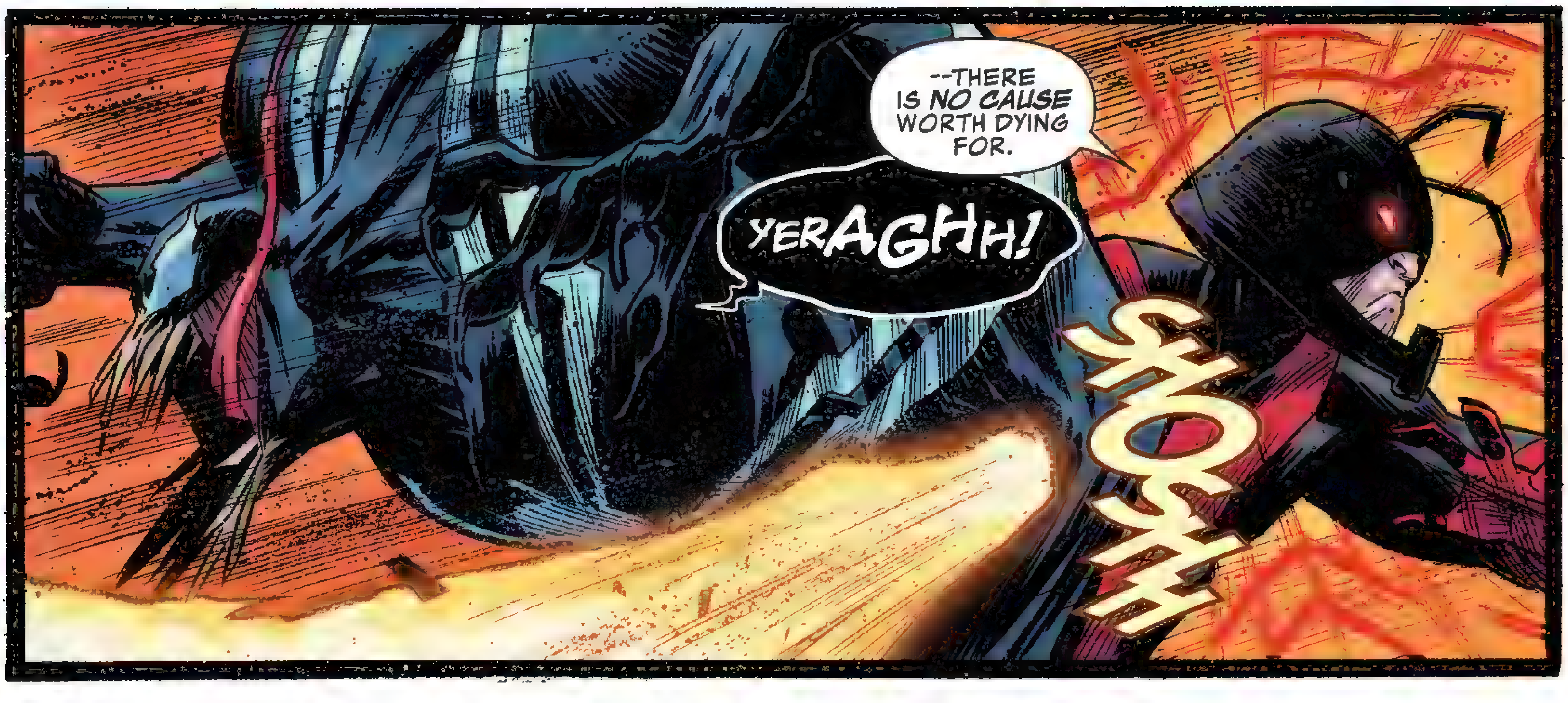
THE CORE, SUBTERRANEAN HOME OF THE DESCENDANTS.
SUCH A BIG DAY FOR YOU, PARVEZ.
SUCH A PROUD DAY.
YOU WILL RULE THE NEW WORLD.
THE FIRST NATURALLY BORN DESCENDANT, PROOF THAT WE ARE LIFE.
OUR TRUE LEADER, OUR TRUE MESSIAH.
MESSIAH? OUR LITTLE PARVEZ?
ONCE THEY START THROWING AROUND THE "M" WORD, YOU KNOW YOU'RE NECK-DEEP IN CULTSVILLE.
KLOPP
TWOKK
INTRUDERS! HALT--
THWIPP
OKAY. C'MON.
VALKYRIE SHOULD BE HERE SOON TO INSTIGATE OUR BIG FLYING HORSE ESCAPE FINALE--
SHE TOLD ME TO TELL YOU SHE'LL BE LATE.
AIEE...
GLAZAT

DON'T BE SORE. A STINGER BITE TO THE INNER EARDRUM IS A PRETTY SOLID EXCUSE.
ERIC? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE--?!
IT'S BLACK ANT NOW.
SORT OF LIKE HOW GOTHS WEAR BLACK AS AN EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION OF ALL THAT ANGST.
I'M LIKE GOTH ANT-MAN.
MY LIFE IS ON THE LINE HERE, YOU UNDERSTAND?
IF I FAIL, IF YOU TAKE PARVEZ, FATHER WILL DEACTIVATE ME.
MIGHT BE THE BETTER OPTION...
GGIVVEN WHATT WWE ARE GGOING TTO DO TO YOUU, ERRICC.
I'M FIGHTING TO SURVIVE.
YOU'RE FIGHTING BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO WITH THAT ANGER DADDY BEAT INTO YOU.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, EUGENE?
WWE PUUTT OUR LIFE ONN THHE LINNE FOR YYOU!


I NEEDED YOU TO *TRUST ME.*
THAT WAS *ALL* IT EVER WAS.
THWUG


I *DIED* SAVING THAT BOY.
KROK
DOESN'T THAT EARN ME SOME *SELFISHNESS* THIS TIME AROUND?


IT BUYSS YYOU *DEATH!*
WOOOSH
I PUSHED THROUGH COMMON SENSE AND LAID MY LIFE DOWN-- *WOULD YOU HAVE?*
I'M BACK FROM THE DEAD TO TELL YOU--


--THERE IS *NO CAUSE* WORTH DYING FOR.
YERAGHH!
SHOOSH

DAMN IT, HAMMOND-- YOU'RE NOT IN YOUR RIGHT MIND.
THEY'VE REPROGRAMMED YOU, SOMETHING--
BECAUSE THE ROBOT MAN COULDN'T HAVE SEEN THE TRUTH FOR HIMSELF AND EXERCISED FREE WILL?
NO-- BECAUSE INFLICTING THIS ON MANKIND IS COWARDICE!
I BRING THEM IMMORTALITY!
GHAH--
FWOOOSH
THE CULMINATION OF YOUR FATHER'S WORK-- OOF!
WORK I WOULD WILLINGLY DIE TO UNDO.
KRA DOOOM

LAST CHANCE, WASPLOCK.
YOU ARE MORE RIGHT THAN YOU KNOW.
FAR BE IT FROM ME TO PAT MYSELF ON THE BACK--
--BUT I PREPARED FOR THIS EXACT EVENTUALITY--
--THE VERY DAY I LEARNED YOU WOULD BE PART OF THIS TEAM, PYM.
"HANK PYM IS JOINING?" I THOUGHT.
WELL, I'D BETTER HAVE AN E.M.P. DISRUPTOR PREPARED IN CASE OF A ROBOT INVASION.
GGAAZZAAKK

PLANNING FOR FUTURE EVENTUALITIES PREVAILS AGAIN.
M-MY GOD... I...
I SPOKE THE CODE, HANK... I WAS PATCHED IN--
AND YOU WILL BE AGAIN, MY LOVE!
SHE'S LONG GONE.
MY GOD, PYM...ARE YOU...
WE HAVEN'T ANY TIME LEFT!
IF WE DESTROY THE ORB, ALL THE DESCENDANTS WILL DIE, THE VIRUS WILL DIE AS WELL.
BUT IF WE WAIT UNTIL THE PROCESS IS COMPLETE, UNTIL AFTER MAN AND MACHINE ARE MERGED--

--YOU'LL KILL EVERYONE ON THE PLANET.
THEY LOOK SCARED.
SIMPLE-MINDED. THEY WOULD RATHER DIE THAN ASCEND.
THEN THEY WILL.
YOU UP TO SERVE FATHER SOME PAYBACK, PYM?
YES.

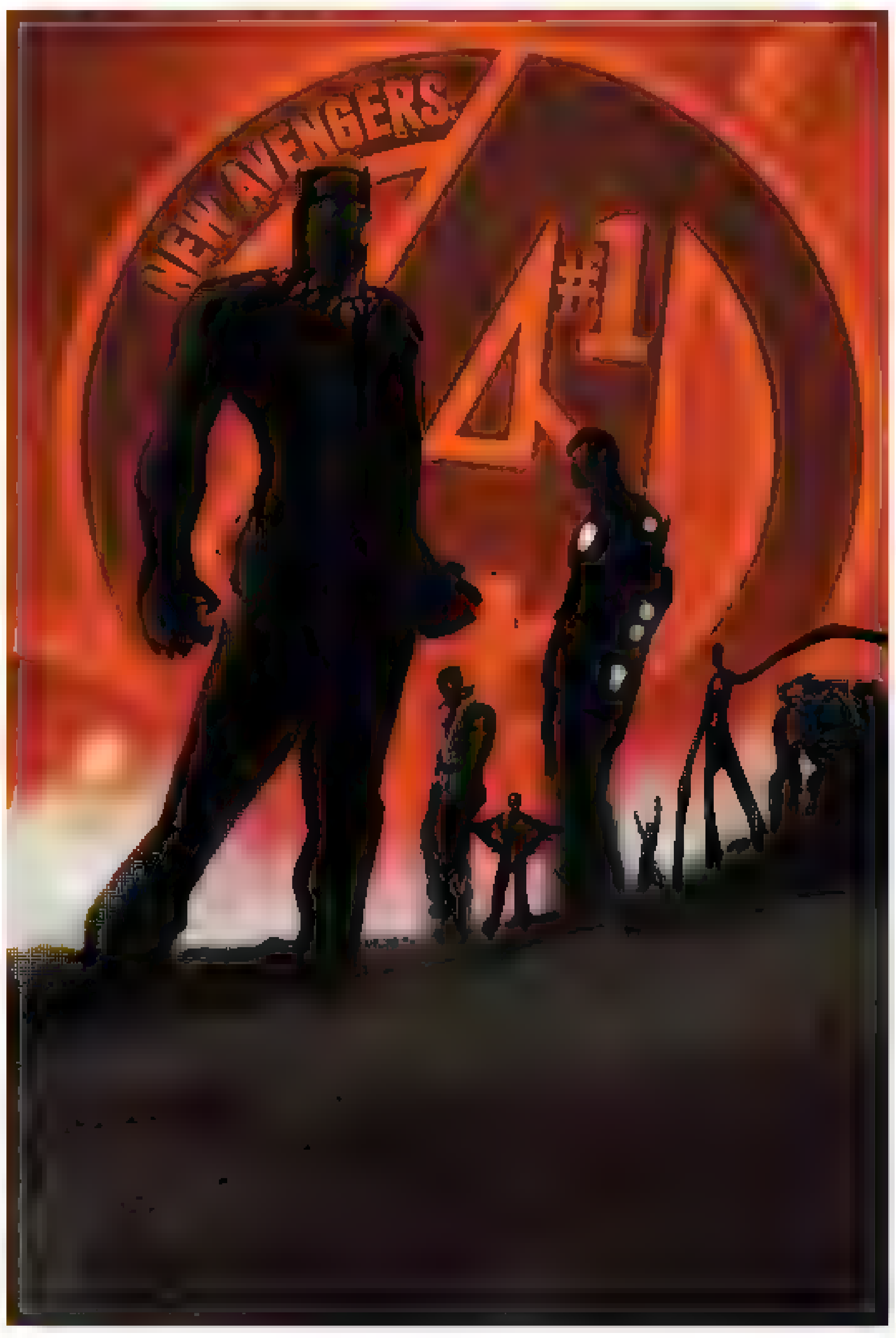
YOU, SIR, ARE A BLEMISH ON THE GOOD NAME OF SCIENCE!
KWA DOOOOOOM

I KNOW HOW THIS MUST SEEM.
BUT IT'S ONLY BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE WORLD WE BRING.
YOU WILL.
IT'S NOT SO CUT AND DRIED. OUR SITUATION.
TELL ME THIS, VENOM! IF I *KILL YOU* FOR MY *OWN SURVIVAL*--
--IS THAT *EVIL?*
ZAKWOOOOM
TO BE CONCLUDED...

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

The hits just keep on coming with no sign of abating, and this month is no exception! The big story for January is the relaunch of **NEW AVENGERS**, now in the hands of scribe Jonathan Hickman and illustrator Steve Epting! Last time these guys got together, they killed the Human Torch and reinvented the Fantastic Four—so you can just imagine what they have in store for the Black Panther and the mysterious, clandestine Illuminati! It's only the end of not just our world, but every world—and it's coming your way twice this month to kick the series off in style!



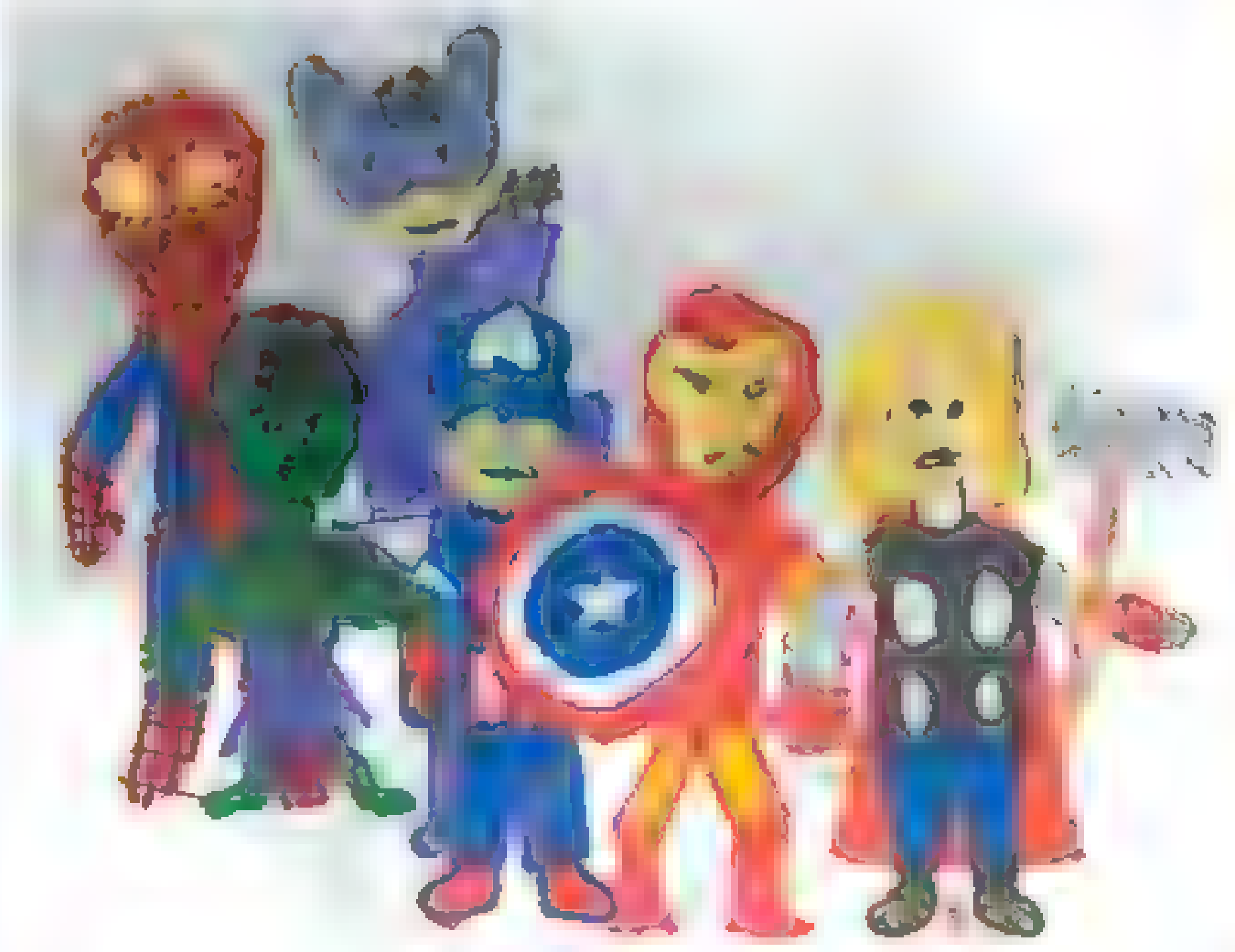
Also back in the spotlight this month is **YOUNG AVENGERS**, getting its own sparkly new first issue (with an in-demand variant by Scott Pilgrim's Bryan Lee O'Malley!) But this isn't quite the Young Avengers that you know—creators Kieron Gillen, Jamie McKelvie, Mike Norton and Matthew Wilson have mixed in some new faces along with the old! So be on the lookout for Loki, Marvel Boy, and Miss America as well as Hulkling, Wiccan and Hawkeye—in **YOUNG AVENGERS #1**!

One of the best things about being in this business is getting letters like this one!

Dear Marvel,

The first Marvel comic I got was the Avengers. I really liked it so I started getting more. I love to draw the Marvel super heroes and they've inspired me to make my own super hero team. For this drawing, I decided to make the faces out of plasticine for a more 3-D effect. I hope you like it. Thank you.

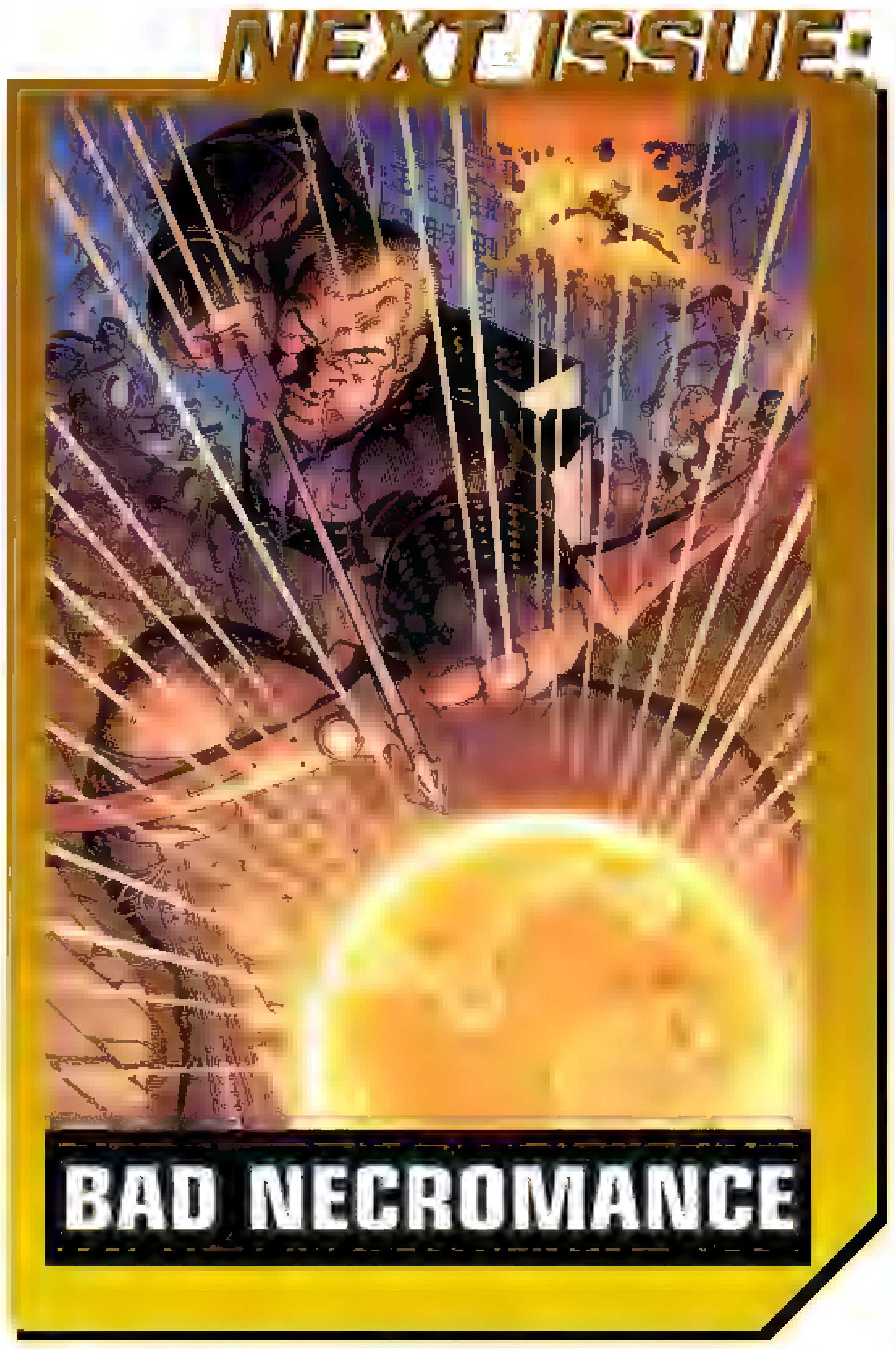
Sincerely,
Humphrey Hamma
Portland, OR



Brilliant work, Humphrey! Thanks for sharing it with us!

We're sorry if it seems like we're beating a dead horse, but we're just so knocked out by the response to the letter we printed a few months ago from Elizabeth Snee about her injured husband that we feel like we just have to share the good vibes with everyone! Among those that offered to send care packages of comics were Scott Randel, Zac Sutton, Stephen Davidson, Rachel Ward, Joan M. McHugh, Derek Callow, Joe Gentile, Santana Arjune, John Voulieris, Michael P. Falcone, and Borja Alcaraz, heroes all! Know that they have been awarded the Imperial Crest of No-Prizedom for their gallant efforts on behalf of our injured comrade, with our thanks!

NEXT ISSUE:



AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE

UNCANNY AVENGERS #4 ☐
FINAL CONFLICT WITH THE RED SKULL'S S-MEN! AND, OH, THAT LAST PAGE!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #11 ☐
IT'S ALL FUN AND GAMES UNTIL SOMEBODY LOSES AN IRON MAN!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE ANNUAL #1 ☐
THE VISION MUST MAKE A DRAMATIC CHOICE ABOUT HIS FUTURE!

AVENGERS #3 ☐
SHOWDOWN ON MARS! FEATURING EVERYBODY!

AVENGERS #4 ☐
ADAM KUBERT ILLUSTRATES AS THE SECRETS OF HYPERION ARE REVEALED!

NEW AVENGERS #1 ☐
THE RETURN OF THE ILLUMINATI!

NEW AVENGERS #2 ☐
ARE THE INFINITY GEMS THE ONLY THING THAT CAN SAVE THE EARTH?

SECRET AVENGERS #36 ☐
VENOM AND VALKYRIE INVADE THE CORE!

SECRET AVENGERS #37 ☐
FINAL ISSUE! IS DEATH THE ONLY WAY TO STOP FATHER'S DESCENDANTS?

AVENGERS ARENA #3 ☐
X-23 VS. ANNIHILATION'S CAMMI! PLUS: A BIG CHANGE FOR DARKHAWK!

YOUNG AVENGERS #1 ☐
THEY'RE BACK—BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS TO SAVE THE WORLD!

DARK AVENGERS #185 ☐
AT WAR WITH THE DEADLY DOCTOR STRANGE!

DARK AVENGERS #186 ☐
THE RETURN OF THE U.S.AGENT!

A + X #4 ☐
BEAST AND SPIDER-MAN FIND THEMSELVES IN A POST-APOCALYPTIC FUTURE, WHILE CAPTAIN AMERICA SPENDS SOME QUALITY TIME WITH QUENTIN QUIRE!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE vs THE AVENGERS #4 ☐

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #10 ☐

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE! E-MAIL US AT: **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM.** PLEASE MARK ALL E-MAILS **"OKAY TO PRINT"**

MARVEL
37
REMENDER·SCALERA·WILSON
SECRET
AVENGERS®
FINAL ISSUE
ARTHUR ADAMS 10-1-12

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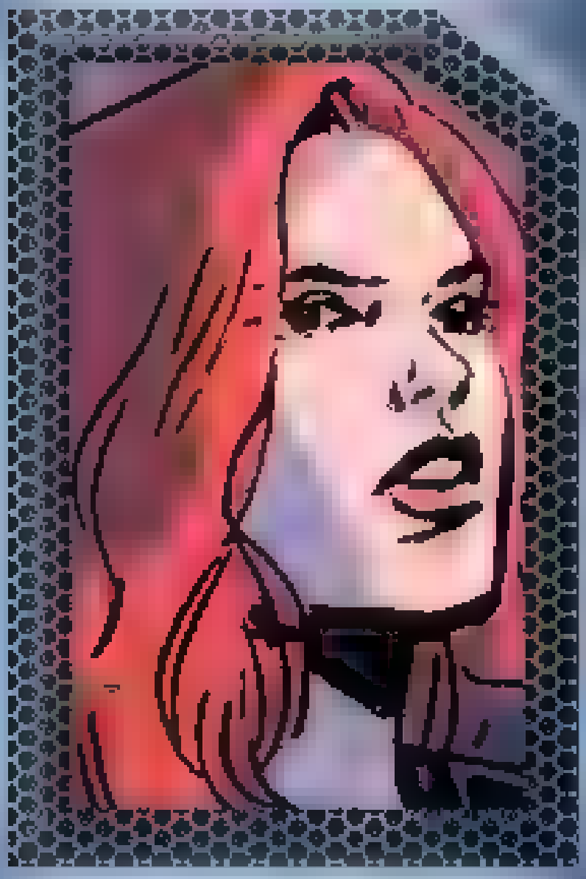
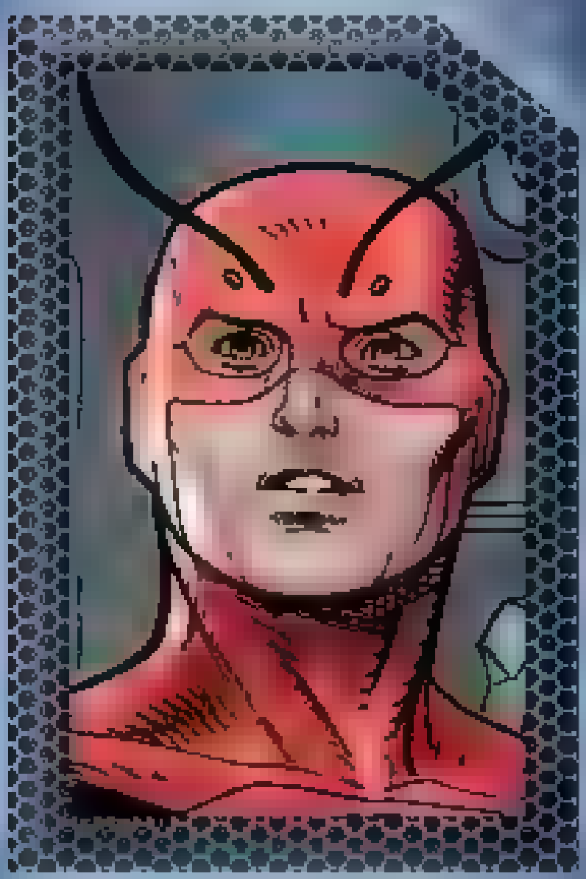
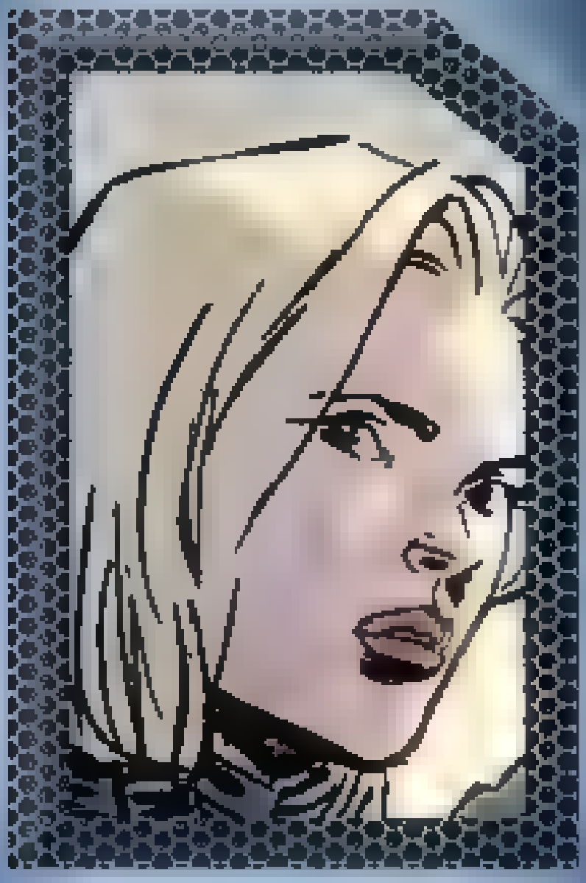
BROUGHT TOGETHER AS A COVERT MISSIONS UNIT BY STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND STAGING FROM A MINIATURIZED LIGHTHOUSE STATION IN ORBIT ABOVE THE EARTH, THE SECRET AVENGERS TAKE ON THE WORLD'S BIGGEST THREATS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN.

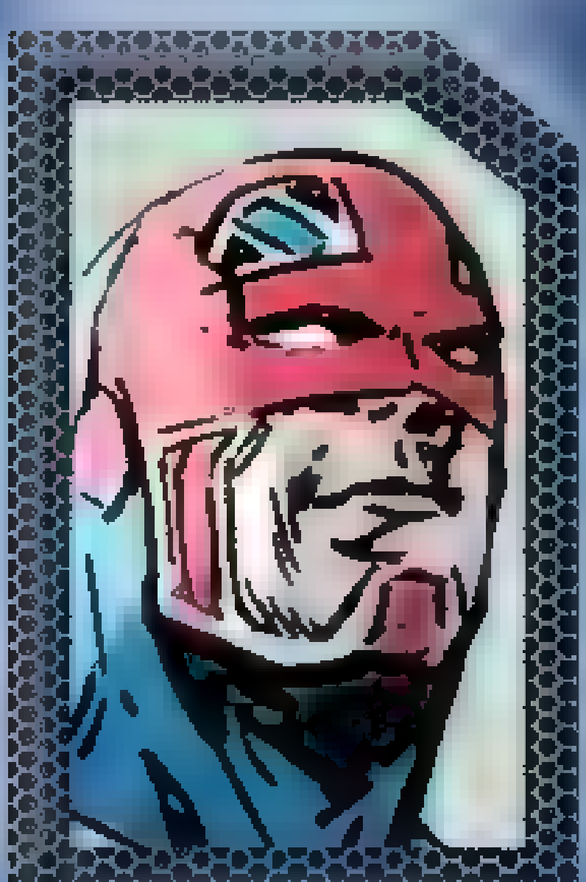
HAWKEYE


BLACK WIDOW


GIANT-MAN


VALKYRIE

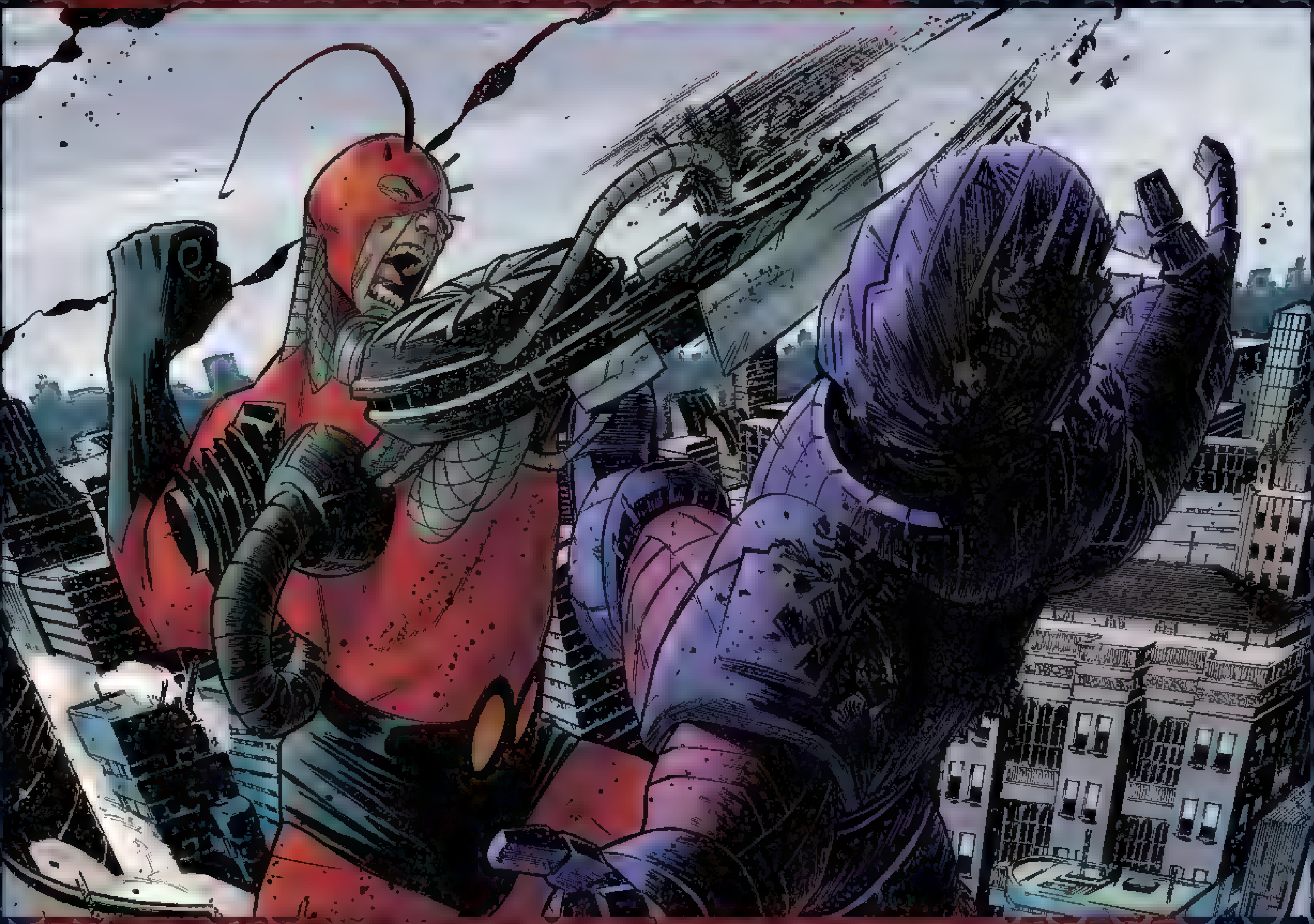
BEAST


CAPTAIN BRITAIN

VENOM

SECRET AVENGERS

MUTINY



YEARS AGO, AIDED BY JAMES BRADDOCK, THE FATHER OF CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE MYSTERIOUS GENIUS KNOWN AS FATHER SUCCEEDED IN CREATING THE DESCENDANTS. A LINEAGE OF SELF-AWARE ROBOTIC LIFE-FORMS. SENT OUT INTO THE WORLD TO INTERMINGLE WITH HUMANITY. FATHER HAS NOW AWOKEN HIS SLEEPER DESCENDANT AGENTS IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH HIS LONG SOUGHT GOAL: THE TRANSFORMATION OF ALL MANKIND INTO A TECHNOLOGICAL SINGULARITY!

THE BLACK WIDOW, VALKYRIE AND VENOM INFILTRATED THE DESCENDANTS' CAPITAL STRONGHOLD. THE CORE. IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESCUE PARVEZ, THE FIRST NATURALLY BORN DESCENDANT CHILD. HOWEVER, THEY WERE AMBUSHED BY THE BLACK ANT. FORMERLY THEIR ALLY ANT-MAN NOW TRANSFORMED INTO AN ARTIFICIAL BEING HIMSELF.

IN NEW YORK, FATHER AND HIS FORCES UNLEASH A NANO-MIST DESIGNED TO TURN ORDINARY PEOPLE INTO DESCENDANTS, AND CONVERTED THE ORIGINAL ANDROID HUMAN TORCH TO HIS CAUSE. AIDED BY SPIDER-MAN, THE SECRET AVENGERS LOCATED THE ORB OF NECROMANCY THAT JAMES BRADDOCK USED TO GIVE THE ORIGINAL DESCENDANTS LIFE. BUT BEFORE THEY COULD USE IT TO END THE THREAT ONCE AND FOR ALL, IT WAS PURLOINED BY THE DESCENDANT CALLED WASPLOK AND RETURNED TO FATHER. NOW THERE SEEMS TO BE NO STOPPING HIS CONVERSION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD INTO TECHNOLOGICAL BEINGS!

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AVENGERS TOWER.
CLINT, WE'RE READY TO START.
CLINT?
UM...WHY DON'T I GO FIRST?
GIVE HAWKEYE SOME TIME TO CATCH HIS BREATH.
OKAY. SURE...

"...START BY TELLING ME ABOUT THE *SPY*."
THIS ISN'T YOU...Y-YOU'RE A BETTER PERSON THAN THIS, ERIC...
I'M A CAREFULLY GROOMED MANIPULATOR OF PERCEPTION WHO LEARNED THAT IT'S NOT SO MUCH *WHAT* YOU ACTUALLY *ARE* THAT GETS YOU WHAT YOU WANT--
--IT'S WHAT YOU *APPEAR TO BE!*
TWOKK
THE BEST WAY TO GET WHAT YOU WANT FROM PEOPLE IS TO SELL THEM AN *IDEA* THAT WHO YOU ARE IS *CONTRARY* TO YOUR *TRUE* NATURE.
I SOLD MYSELF TO YOU AS THE *CLASS CLOWN* WHILE IN TRUTH I'M SELF-SERVING AND CALCULATED.
BUT THIS WAY, YOU OVERLOOK ME AS A THREAT--
A MISTAKE YOU'D *NEVER* MAKE.
BLAM
GHAA--
I *COULD'VE* KILLED YOU, ERIC.
YOU'RE *NOT* EVEN *REAL*. I WOULDN'T LOSE A NIGHT'S SLEEP OVER YOU.
IF THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS *ALTRUISM* AND THERE'S A SELFISH PURPOSE BEHIND EVERY ACTION, THEN TELL ME...
...WHY DON'T I?
BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH I'M A DIGITAL CONSCIOUSNESS--
I *AM* ALIVE.
AND YOU ARE *NO* MURDERER.
BECAUSE YOU SAW ME RISK MY LIFE FOR YOU IN BAGALIA.
BECAUSE I'M THE HERO WHO SAVED THAT BOY, PARVEZ.
BECAUSE I DESERVE TO LIVE...
...AND BECAUSE YOU'RE A *NAÏVE JARHEAD IDIOT!*
GLAZAT
YHAA--
JUST ANOTHER BULLHEADED JOCK WHOSE SWAGGER STOPPED IMPRESSING ANYONE OUTSIDE OF HIGH SCHOOL!
A SAD ADDICT CRIPPLE WHO SERVES AS FODDER HOST TO AN EVIL PARASITE--

BE STILL, MADMAN.
GAKK--
SHUKK
FORTUNATE FOR ME YOU HAVE NEITHER A *SOUL* NOR THE *NOBILITY* THAT WOULD REQUIRE I BEAR YOU TO THE *AFTERLIFE.*
GAKK--
I...
I HAVE A *SOUL...*
I'M NOBLE.
GOOD TO MY WORD--
--YOU'LL BOTH SEE YOUR WAY TO THE *AFTERLIFE* SOON ENOUGH.
"BLACK ANT WAS GONE. I CAN'T SAY IF HE SURVIVED."

I PERSONALLY RECRUITED ERIC. I SAW GOOD IN THE MAN...
WE ALL DID. AND OUR ERIC DIED A *HERO.*
BUT THIS L.M.D. VERSION OF HIM...IS SOMETHING *ELSE.*
I SAW A SIMILAR CHANGE IN *THE TORCH* AND *PYM.* FATHER'S MANIPULATIONS, I'D WAGER.
IT CAN BE UNDONE. ONCE BEAST HAD SHORTED OUT THE SYSTEMS INFECTING HIM, PYM PUT UP A PROPER FIGHT...
YOU CAN'T FORCE THIS MERGING AND SEE THIS AS ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE *HOSTILE INVASION* IT IS!
YOU KNOW THAT IS A LIE.
HUMANITY IS STUNTED AND SUICIDAL.
THEY *MUST* BE SAVED...
GRGHAGG--!

THE SINGULARITY *CANNOT* WAIT FOR THEIR CONSENT.
HUMANITY MUST BE *LIBERATED* FROM ITS OLD SKINS BUILT ON SAVAGE AND ILLOGICAL IMPULSES.
THEY WILL KNOW HARMONY AND PEACE.
THEY WILL LIVE *FOREVER.*
TELL ME, BRIAN...
WHY DO YOU WANT TO *STOP IT?*
NO ONE EVER FORCED *HUMANITY* ON YOU, JIM--BUT YOU *ALWAYS* STRIVED TO OBTAIN IT.
WITHOUT OVERCOMING THE STRIFE AND TURMOIL OF LIFE, IF THERE ARE NO RISKS--*NOTHING IS EARNED!*
THROUGH DILIGENCE AND TENACITY, WE *EARN* OUR LIVES, OUR CHARACTER, OUR SKILLS...
...AND WE MUST ONE DAY *DIE.*
THE PART OF EXISTENCE THAT MAKES IT *PRECIOUS* IS THE *FINITE* AMOUNT OF IT WE HAVE.
FACING THAT WITH NOBILITY, AND FIGHTING TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF OUR TIME--*THAT IS BEING HUMAN.*
"AND YOU ARE FIGHTING TO *ERASE* THAT, JIM."
NO...YOU HAVE LIFE, BUT TO BECOME A REAL BOY, YOU MUST PROVE YOURSELF...
"...BRAVE, TRUTHFUL AND UNSELFISH."

PLEASE, REMAIN CALM. THE NANO MIST IS HEALTHY AND GOOD.
YOU'RE EVOLVING QUICKLY NOW. YOU CAN THINK MANY TIMES FASTER. SEE AND HEAR MORE CLEARLY--
IT IS WONDERFUL, IS IT NOT?
I-I CAN CLEARLY SEE THE CODE OF OBJECTIVE REALITY--!
I'VE BEEN WASTING MY TIME--
LIFETIME OF MAKING THE TOUGH SHOT AT THE LAST MINUTE--
--NEVER BEEN MORE ON THE LINE THAN NOW.
BUT GETTING THE ORB BACK ISN'T EVEN THE HARD PART.
KRASHH
THE DECISION TO DESTROY IT AND KILL THIS "SPECIES" IS.
DOWN TO THE WIRE--
--DO THIS NOW OR IT'S ALL OVER.
MAN AND MACHINE MARRIED FOREVER WITH NO WAY TO SEPARATE THEM AGAIN.
WHAT A GREAT IMPROMPTU TEAM-UP THIS HAS BEEN, WHAT WITH THE ROBOTS AND THE END OF THE WORLD.

SO--WHAT'S THE PLAN?! ARE WE GOING TO DESTROY THAT THING?
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE, SPIDEY--WE'RE TALKING ABOUT KILLING OFF A SPECIES!
I'M WITH YOU. BUT WE NEED TO EITHER ACCEPT WE'RE ALL MERGING WITH R2-D2, OR UNPLUG THE PROGRAM--
BECAUSE WE'RE ALL BEGINNING TO TRANSFORM.
HE'S RIGHT.
I CAN SEE IT--GROWING INSIDE.
THOUGHT PROCESS SO CLEAN, SO FAST--THE CODE--IT'S PERFECT--
--HOW CAN I STAND IN THE WAY?
SWAK
I HEAR YOUR VOICE, MY CHILD! AN INFANT JOINING THE UNIVERSAL CONVERSATION!
MY GOD--IT'S ALL SO BEAUTIFUL.
KRASHH
DIVINE ALIGNMENT--
PERFECT COMMUNION.
OOF--!

MY LEFT KNEE EXPLODES--
IT'S HEALED BEFORE I HIT THE GROUND AGAIN.
WHY AM I FIGHTING THIS--
--NOT ME--
A *PRIMAL* VOICE FRIGHTENED BY THE LIGHT.
OR REJECTING AN *UNNATURAL* INFESTATION.
RUNNING OUT OF TIME--
TRANSFORMATION NEARLY COMPLETE.
PLEASE, THIS IS *BETTER* FOR US.
LET IT FINISH, HAWKEYE.
THE MASSES OF HUMANITY NEED SUFFER *NO LONGER.*
I WILL *DIE* OF MY CANCER THIS YEAR IF YOU STOP IT.
NO.
CAN'T--
WON'T LET THIS HAPPEN--
IT'S *EXACTLY* WHAT YOU DO.
YOU *TRUST* IN THIS--THE GLORIOUS NEXT STAGE.
LET GO OF YOUR *FEAR* AND *MISTRUST.*

THE PIGS IN THE MANOR HOUSE SEE LITTLE VALUE IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN THEIR OWN DOMINION.
HESITATION COSTS ME--
--COSTS US ALL.
SHRKK
THIS IS NOT PUNISHMENT-- THIS IS PROGRESS--
WHAT INVADER EVER SAYS DIFFERENTLY?
KROP
THAT'S YOUR OLD MIND FIGHTING THE LOGIC YOU NOW SEE.
YOU DO NOT FEAR THIS MERGING.
YOU FEAR LOSS OF CONTROL.
SHRKK
WHAT WILL MAKE YOU SPECIAL WHEN ALL MANKIND SHARES IN YOUR GIFTS?
SHRED
NO LONGER ELEVATED ABOVE THE COMMON RABBLE--
NO LONGER THE BEST AT ANYTHING.
WE WILL ALL BE EXCEPTIONAL--
WUMP
--AND WE WILL NO LONGER REQUIRE YOUR SUPERVISION!

SUPERVISION ISN'T ALL WE DO, LADY DEATHSTRIKE--
--THE JOB ALSO CALLS FOR A LOT OF *"PUNCHING."*
KROOM
I FOUND THE TORCH BUT HE...HE JUST FLEW OFF. I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING TO HELP US.
AND I... I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF I *WANT* TO STOP THIS ANYMORE, CLINT.
I'M *LOSING* MYSELF TO IT.
CAN'T FIGHT IT MUCH LONGER.
WE *MUST* DESTROY THE ORB.
WE HAVE TO DO IT *NOW*. BEFORE WE CHANGE OUR--
--MINDS.
HOLY HELL!

DOOOOM
MOVE!
I WILL NOT RISK YOUR FAILURE TO CONVERT.
GO--DON'T THINK--
--GET THE ORB--
DESTROY IT.
QUICKLY--
BUT WHY?
WHY STOP IT?!
THE WORLD WILL BE PERFECT, BEAUTIFUL--
AND I'M SORRY YOU WON'T BE HERE TO SEE IT, MY SON.
NO ONE WILL.

DO IT, HAWKEYE!
DO IT NOW!
PULL THE BOW.
I'M KILLING A NEW SPECIES.
LOAD THE EXPLOSIVE TIP ARROW.
IGNORE THE INFECTION-- *RELEASE THE BOLT.*
AVENGERS DON'T KILL.
THE ONLY WAY TO PROTECT HUMANITY.
AVENGERS DON'T KILL.

HAND WON'T COMPLY--
THIS ISN'T RIGHT--
JUST LOOK AROUND YOU!
TRANSFORMATION ALMOST COMPLETE--
DO IT.
NO!
THINK!
THINK ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS--
--MASS MURDER--
ON MY HEAD FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE--
RELEASE THE ARROW.
ALL ON YOU--
THIS ONE SHOT--
MANKIND'S LAST CHANCE--
RELEASE THE DAMNED ARROW!

JIM?!
WHAT ARE YOU--
NOT LIKE THIS.
"WE WILL NOT ERASE *HUMANITY* TO WRITE *OUR* FUTURE."
DHOOOOOOOOMM

Brian Braddock watched as the Master Mold died.
The light in the old robot's eyes sputtered and dimmed.
A groan released in frustration.
Father was shattered.
The electronic harmony of his children's voices cut short, drifting away to stark silence.
Janet, a messenger he sent back from his perfect future, was dead.
SEVENTY YEARS OF PREPARATION FOR NOTHING!
Many nights this time-traveling messenger would sit with the old man and tell him tales of a future where the Singularity brought peace and prosperity.
A future now dead.
Dead along with his children.
Dead for having the audacity to push mankind out of the mud and towards its natural cosmic awakening, the old man tells himself.
Dead for bearing the gift of eternal life and prosperity.
A gift mankind vomited back upon them like poison.
Poison to the suffering they define themselves by.
He was a bright messiah bringing salvation, but like all men with a dream of bettering humanity...
He had been neutered.
His dream killed along with his descendants.

IT'S OVER.
THE ORB OF NECROMANCY IS DESTROYED.
MY FATHER'S MISTAKE UNDONE.
THE SPARK OF TRUE LIFE TAKEN BACK FROM YOUR DESCENDANTS.
NOT ALL OF THEM. I HEAR A VOICE...
ONE YET REMAINS.
KRITCHH
AND HE WILL REBUILD.
FFSSHHHHHH

JIM...
WHAT YOU DID--IT *HAD* TO BE DONE.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MUST BE FEELING--
NO.
"YOU CANNOT *BEGIN* TO IMAGINE WHAT I AM FEELING."
DEAD. ALL OF THEM...
JUST DEAD.
NO.
NOT ALL.

WHERE DID JIM GO AFTER HE DESTROYED THE ORB?
HE JUST... FLEW OFF. THE LOOK IN HIS EYES, STEVE...
I'VE NEVER SEEN *ANYTHING* LIKE IT.
THE EYES OF A MAN WHO'D KILLED HIS CHILDREN, KILLED HIS CHANCE TO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE HE FIT IN.
WE'RE ALL STILL HERE BECAUSE OF JIM HAMMOND.
"AND HE'LL LIVE WITH THE COST FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE."
END.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS:

In 2001 I began working on THE AVENGERS inking and finishing over the pencils of Kieron Dwyer. At the time most of my energies were being put into writing and drawing a few of my creator-owned comic books as well as directing and producing an animated series for Wild Brain Animation. At that point I had been disinterested in super hero comic books for quite some time, but when my studio mate Kieron accepted a job penciling THE AVENGERS I raised my hand and offered my inking immediately. Having grown up a comic book fanatic it seemed this would likely be my one and only chance to contribute anything to the greater Marvel Universe, and on THE AVENGERS no less.

During the course of the production I began picking up mainstream comic books again and found that they had gotten a great deal better since the mid-90s when I walked away from them. While I was working on AVENGERS pages I began to write down notes and ideas that were suddenly pouring out of my brain. Over a few months, after I filled half a sketchbook with Marvel pitches and character sketches, I realized that I had caught the bug; I wanted to write these books. I wanted to add a chapter to the history of the Marvel Universe in my voice with some of the characters that I loved.

Of course at this point I had just solidified myself in the eyes of the majority of the mainstream comic book world not as a writer or penciler but as an inker. I in no way mean that to be derogatory, inking is often overlooked and underrated in terms of how much it can add to or detract from the pencils. It's an art form unto itself, and one that I am proud to have mastered, but it did concern me that trying to present myself to mainstream comic book editors as a writer and/or penciler would now be difficult.

On top of that, I had no idea how to go about it. At first I was sending direct, and unsolicited, pitches for SECRET WARS revivals to Joe Quesada while also pitching my penciled pages to the art department. When I didn't receive a response I decided it was not in the cards and happily returned my focus to creator-owned books, to make them the best I possibly could, and to build my own universe. But the thought was still there, in the back of my head.

Eventually after years of honing my craft producing dozens of volumes of creator-owned graphic novels I found myself at Marvel Comics through the support of Axel Alonso and Matt Fraction. Still, I was certain as I built my books up

RICK REMENDER BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS SECRET AVENGERS.

at Marvel that I would never be able to play with the Avengers toys that had reignited my desire to do this in the first place. I'd worked for Tom Brevoort as an inker; how could he ever hire me to write an Avengers comic book? Had that ever been done in mainstream comics?

As an X-Men and Spider-Man fan I was very happy writing X-FORCE and VENOM for the company. Thinking the AVENGERS franchise far off limits I put it out of my mind. Until a fateful day when I discovered the SECRET AVENGERS title would need a writer. I figured why not contact Tom and test the waters, I'd worked for Tom and Lauren Sankovitch on the ill-fated DR. VOODOO series, and though I'd been a bit temperamental as that series' numbers killed it on the vine, I was very proud of what we'd cooked up and figured maybe I had a shot.

As it turned out, Tom had already considered me for the job and intended to contact me. In 2002 I thought a return to Marvel, a return to THE AVENGERS, as writer would be impossible, but here I was with the offer. It was a tremendous vote of confidence and one I will always be appreciative of.

The series has been blessed with a number of wonderful artists during my time on it including covers by living legends Arthur Adams and Alan Davis, and interiors by Gabe Hardman, Bettie Breitweiser, Renato Guedes, Andy Kuhn and the man who did the majority of my run, Matteo Scalera. Accompanied by my longtime collaborator colorist Matthew Wilson, Matteo added a visual identity to the series and showed the world that he is the next superstar of sequential art. Matteo is someone who I've wanted to work with for many years. When Gabe Hardman had to leave the series I threw Matteo's name out certain he would be far too booked to take the book on. And he was busy, but the dude is some kind of super comic book making machine man and he managed to juggle all of it while still producing some of the most stunning pages I've ever been associated with.

Next up you have Nick Spencer taking over the series. Nick has actually written on the series earlier, shortly after Ed Brubaker departed, and has a wonderful grasp on the concept and characters. I know a good deal of what he has planned, and the high concept alone is one you're going to be blown away by. It's a nice little twist on the idea of this book that adds many layers of intrigue and I can't wait to read the series under his pen.

--Rick Remender

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

The Marvel Now! train just keeps on a-chuggin' this month, with the debut of the all-new **SECRET AVENGERS #1**! It's a brand-new team with a brand-new mission as creators Nick Spencer and Luke Ross guide Nick Fury and Phil Coulson in assembling a crew of operatives for global missions so secret, even the heroes themselves can't know about them! If you loved the Black Widow sequence in the AVENGERS film (and, let's face it, who didn't?) then this is the book for you!

MARVEL NOW!
SECRET AVENGERS #1
BUDAPEST
NICK SPENCER
LUKE ROSS
MATTHEW WILSON
JOIN THE REVOLUTION
FREE
AR
001

Two other Now! titles debuting this month that might be of interest to Avengers aficionados: Valkyrie and Misty Knight form the nucleus of a female-focused super-team in **FEARLESS DEFENDERS #1** by Cullen Bunn and Will Sliney! And the gone-but-not-forgotten Brian Michael Bendis teams with Steve McNiven to reveal the origin of Star-Lord in **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #0.1**! And both series come with the certified Avengers seal of approval!

You know what comic not enough of you are reading? **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE**! Want to know why you should? Here's a taste:

Dear Ms. DeConnick and Mr. Caselli,

I have just finished AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #9 and wanted to write to you immediately, partly because although I've never written to a comic before I wanted to contact you and show my appreciation, and partly to offer my hand in marriage to one or both of you, whatever you prefer.

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #9 is the most perfect comic I've read since NEXTWAVE. I've been a huge fan of the Avengers for a while now, and Tony Stark in particular and his appearance in this was an absolute joy to read. Everyone was note-perfect, actually, and it's so rare, I think, to read a comic that's just so much fun and works the team dynamic so well. It's fantastic that Marvel isn't afraid to embrace the lighter side of super-heroics. I read it straight through three times, and then showed it to everyone else I met for the rest of the afternoon.

Thanks for such a great comic, and I can't wait to read issue #10!

Olivia,
London, UK

And to close us out for the month, let's do another installment of Avengers Cosplay! This is Avengers fan Jason Childers rocking an outstanding classic Hawkeye outfit!

Photo by Judy Stephens for Marvel.com

There's no denying it, Jason—purple is definitely your color!

NEXT ISSUE:

MARVEL NOW!
SECRET AVENGERS #1
BUDAPEST
NICK SPENCER
LUKE ROSS
MATTHEW WILSON

SHHH! ALL NEW SECRETS!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE

AVENGERS #5 ☐
THE ORIGIN OF SMASHER!
AVENGERS #6 ☐
REVEALED! THE SECRET OF CAPTAIN UNIVERSE!
AVENGERS ARENA #4 ☐
THE RUNAWAYS VS AVENGERS ACADEMY!
AVENGERS ARENA #5 ☐
MAYHEM AMONGST THE BRADDOCK ACADEMY!
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #12 ☐
THE BLACK WIDOW'S LEDGER!
DARK AVENGERS #187 ☐
ESCAPE FROM KING THING'S TORTURE PIT!
NEW AVENGERS #3 ☐
THE RETURN OF THE ILLUMINATI!
SECRET AVENGERS #1 ☐
WE'D TELL YOU, BUT YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE ISN'T HIGH ENOUGH!
UNCANNY AVENGERS #5 ☐
OLIVIER COIPEL! AND THREE NEW MEMBERS!
YOUNG AVENGERS #2 ☐
PARENTAL STRIFE! PLUS THE UNCANNY AVENGERS!
A + X #5 ☐
IRON MAN AND THE BEAST! IRON FIST AND DOOP!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #11 ☐

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